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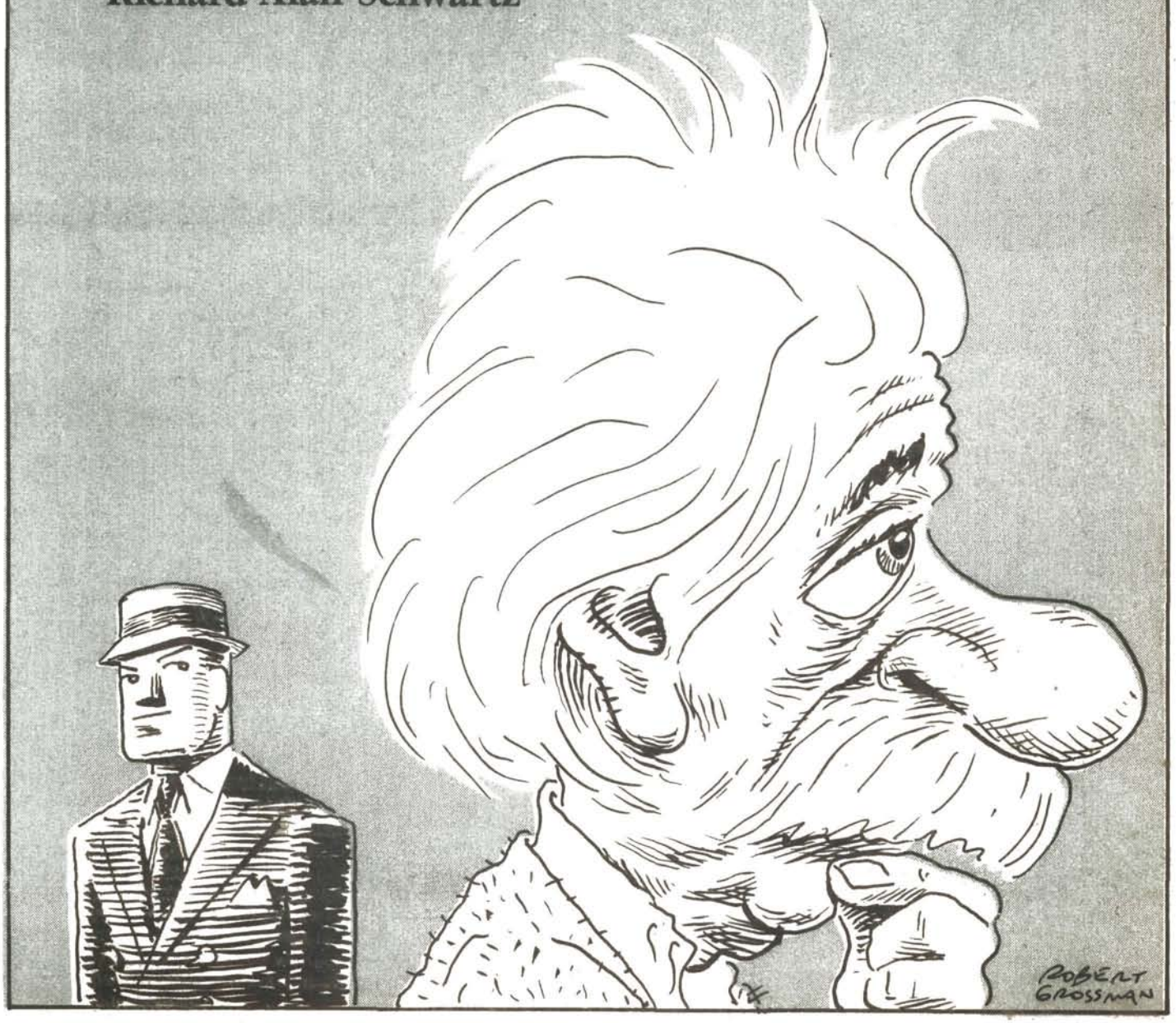
The F.B.I. and Dr. Einstein

Richard Alan Schwartz



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EXCHANGE.

The Left and the Rosenbergs

New York City

Arthur Kinoy's "Reflections on the Rosenbergs" [*The Nation*, June 11] is evocative and moving. It is heartening that Harvard University Press is publishing his book *Rights on Trial: The Odyssey of a People's Lawyer*, from which the *Nation* article was excerpted. The author has earned with distinction the title "people's advocate."

Kinoy's report is a personal history. That is a valid form of history and is often dramatically effective, but it imposes severe obligations on the historian to go beyond generalizations about the condition of the times he is writing about. At least in his *Nation* article, I am afraid, Kinoy has not met those obligations, which may cause readers with little or no knowledge of the events set forth to draw unwarranted conclusions, particularly about the left at that time.

Kinoy says the fear of having their activities equated with "so-called atomic espionage" dissuaded "leaders of people's organizations who had been active during the New Deal and World War II [from] organizing a mass defense for the Rosenbergs and Sobell at the time of the indictment and trial." He writes: "What was most tragic about the left's reaction to the trial was that it stemmed from a failure to understand that the very purpose of the government's case was to destroy the effectiveness of opposition to its cold war policies. But by not rallying a mass movement of support for the Rosenbergs and Sobell, the left, in the mind of the public, virtually accepted the prosecution's charges."

The "real failure" in the Rosenberg case, he says, was the "failure of the people's movements—of the militant trade unionists, the liberals, the socialists, the Communists—of all of us, to respond to the indictments and arrests with a massive political and legal counteroffensive, or with any show of a mass opposition to the government's strategy . . . a matter that has rarely been faced. Yet it goes to the heart of the issue: the survival of democratic movements during periods of attacks by the establishment."

What was the condition of the American left at the time of the Rosenberg trial? A better question might be: *Was* there an effective, organized left at that time? The Communist Party was the most organized entity, but it was beleaguered by government harassment, which culminated in the trials of its leaders, and decimated by internal contradictions and rigidity. It had abandoned independent political action for the so-called "mainstream theory," according to which radicals were to devote their energies to liberalizing the Democratic Party because "that's where the people are." That strategy was a gross misreading of the failure of the 1948 Progressive Party movement, and of the aspirations and needs of the American electorate.

The militant trade unionists, hounded out of the C.I.O. by a leadership determined to prove its patriotism in the battle against the "international Communist conspiracy," were struggling for survival. The "democratic socialists," hopelessly in thrall to anti-Communism, were running for cover when they were not joining the Hoover-Truman-Nixon-McCarthy crusade against "traitors" in our midst. Alger Hiss had been convicted at his second trial and was on his way to prison.

The Soviet Union had detonated an atomic device, ending America's nuclear monopoly and setting off the howl: "Who gave the Bomb to Russia?" The People's Republic of China had come into being after a bitter civil war, adding a second head to the monster threatening our way of life under God. And the press faithfully echoed and reinforced every hysterical charge, every episode concocted to inflame the American people against genuine democratic traditions.

In the face of such an onslaught, and considering the preoccupation and disintegration of the left, it is remarkable that there was as much opposition to the anti-Communist crusade as there was. Considerable credit for this should be given to three independent left publications that were started during this period: *National Guardian* (1948), *Monthly Review* (1949) and *I.F. Stone's Weekly* (1952). In many ways these publications served as committees of correspondence for "the other America," and they helped hold political opposition in the United States together. They were notably assisted by *The Nation* under the direction of Freda Kirchwey and Carey McWilliams.

Like Kinoy, I was a participant in the history of the time. I was executive editor of the *National Guardian*, serving with Cedric Belfrage, the editor, John T. McManus, the general manager, and a steadfast staff who had gravitated toward our penny-poor publication convinced of the need for an alternative press before that term even existed. Contrary to Kinoy's assertion, we, along with thousands of other dissenting Americans, understood full well the government's motive—to wipe out opposition to cold war policy.

With that understanding, we covered the dangerously farcical Smith Act trials of the Communist Party leadership and defended the right of Communists to take their place in the national political debate. We insisted that Alger Hiss was not the target at his trials: the defendant was the philosophy of the New Deal. When few publications in the nation would write about the Rosenbergs except to call for their blood, we decided to investigate their case; in August 1951, we began publishing a series of reports that clearly demonstrated the government's intent to stifle opposition to the cold war. The author of the series was William A. Reuben, a journalist who continues to this day his effort to establish, for the record, the monstrous miscarriage of justice involved.

This investigative journalism sparked the worldwide clemency campaign for the Rosenbergs. It also gave rise to the Committee to Secure Justice in the Rosenberg Case, whose activities engaged hundreds of American leftists, and through them innumerable others not on the left, who were eager to participate despite the prevalent atmosphere of fear. . . .

In a post-mortem analysis in the June 29, 1953, *National Guardian*, Emanuel Bloch, the Rosenbergs' lawyer, wrote:

> I remember well those first grim days of March 1951, following the trial and sentence, when every avenue of information and publicity suddenly closed. With the slamming of the door of the Death House, a conspiracy of silence settled on the press. . . . To us of the defense, this was a desperate situation indeed. . . . The deadly conspiracy to forget the Rosenbergs was shattered by the *National Guardian*. Its editors saw the meaning of the attack upon an obscure engineer and his wife. The Rosenberg Case, which had died in the great papers, came alive in the *National Guardian*.

I cite this record in support of Kinoy's final sentences, to which his own career has borne principled witness: "With courage and foresight, we must stand firm and, whatever the obstacles, find ways to launch a popular counteroffensive. For that offers the only real guarantee of victory."

Well stated. But historians must also present the record with generous evidence beyond their personal experience, to give heart to succeeding generations that history has a noble continuity. Therein lies the real guarantee of victory. *James Aronson*

KINOY REPLIES

New York City

I have read with deep appreciation the comments of James Aronson concerning my recent article in *The Nation*. I have always had the most profound respect for the contributions made by the *National Guardian* and its founders and editors, including Aronson, in the bitter and tense days of the first cold war.

My article was drawn primarily from my reflections on the shattering experience of the day the Rosenbergs were executed. To the degree that it did not deal with the courageous role played by the *Guardian* or with William Reuben's historic articles after the

(Continued on Page 180)

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CONTENTS.

Volume 237, Number 6

EXCHANGE

162 The Left and the Rosenbergs

EDITORIALS

163 Madam Secretary
164 Murder in Manila *Walden Bello and Joel Rocamora*
165 The War Museum *James Munves*
166 *Dispatches* *Michael Fleshman and James Cason*

ARTICLES

168 What the File Tells: The F.B.I. and Dr. Einstein *Richard Alan Schwartz*
173 Letter From Europe: How Many Masses Is Poland Worth? *Daniel Singer*
176 Diplomatic Sacrifice?: Steven Mosher and the Politics Of Cultural Exchange *Jeffrey Lincoln*

BOOKS & THE ARTS

181 Clecak: America's Quest for the Ideal Self: Dissent and Fulfillment in the 60s and 70s *Maurice Isserman*
183 Abel, ed.: Writing and Sexual Difference
Keohane, Rosaldo and Gelpi, eds.: Feminist Theory: A Critique of Ideology
Heilbrun and Higonnet, eds.: The Representation of Women in Fiction: Selected Papers From the English Institute, 1981
Slater: Dickens and Women *Linda Bamber*
187 Chase: During the Reign Of the Queen of Persia *Fran R. Schumer*
187 The Miles Between (poem) *Howard Moss*

Drawings by Robert Grossman

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EDITORIALS.

Madam Secretary

Secretary of State Jeane J. Kirkpatrick.

How does that strike you? Does it come easily? Does it roll trippingly off the tongue? Or does it make you gag? No matter. You have no say in it. And it seems to us the season's bureaucratic best bet.

Here is the argument, based on absolutely no inside dope, nothing more than a bemused study of the chaos in the foreign policy apparatus of the Reagan Administration:

(1) The present Secretary of State is obviously miserable in his low-paying job. George Shultz is widely reported to be so unhappy that he told the President he felt like "going back to California" and the higher brackets of multinational business.

(2) The Reagan foreign policy is in a state of immobility, all its "initiatives" having failed in places where they might have made some difference—except in Central America, where a couple of healthy little wars are brewing.

(3) Kirkpatrick is the inventor and leading proponent of an updated version of gunboat diplomacy in that region.

(4) Ronald Reagan has a problem with the women's vote. Women tend to dislike him more than men do. It's called the "gender gap," and it's measured in substantial, possibly fatal percentages. He could cure this ailment, he might

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think, by naming a woman Secretary of State.

Such a move would be a predictably simplistic solution to a sticky problem, entirely characteristic of this Administration. Of course, having three secretaries of state in one term could make the President look bad. It's as though he has trouble handling the help. But the White House's hope would be that such petty considerations would be drowned in the sentimental gush engendered by naming The First Woman Secretary of State. How could Reagan be accused of being antiwoman if he picked a member of the "fair," or "gentler," sex, as he might put it, to the senior Cabinet post, first in the line of Presidential succession?

There's a lot of talk about how Shultz has been "emasculated" by the hard-boiled operations of the national security adviser and the Secretary of Defense. That at least could not be said of Kirkpatrick if she took over.

But the predictable sexist sniggers are irrelevant; her ideological fervor gives her the toughness not to let Judge Clark and Secretary Weinberger push her around. Would she let them send her to the Middle East on a futile peacemaking mission? Would she put up with them not telling her that armadas were being dispatched to glower at Nicaragua from two oceans? Out of the question. No wonder George Shultz longs for the Bechtel Corporation and his tycoon buddies at the Bohemian Grove (no ladies admitted).

Then there's the Kissinger factor. Kirkpatrick apparently played a key role in the maneuvering to create the commission on Central America that he heads. She's been a frequent and honored guest at the Great Consultant's lavish dinner table, goes Gotham gossip. She might have helped still the doubts of the White House squares about putting the crown jewel of their policy into those slippery hands. Someone tough, and also handy with the lingo of "concepts" and "nuances," might be needed to keep him from going off the reservation. That's where Madam Secretary would come in.

There's a persuasive case for making Kirkpatrick the Secretary of State, for all those dreadful reasons. Please don't blame us if it happens. All we've done is to show how it might solve a personal, bureaucratic and policy problem for the Administration.

It will happen if the Reagan Administration can summon up a little virility.

Murder in Manila

Even in the Philippines, where murder by the government is routine, the assassination of former Senator Benigno Aquino Jr. has provoked a national sense of shock. It has also had a profound effect on the growing opposition to the rule of President Ferdinand Marcos; when Filipinos saw the grisly execution, which was carried out at Manila International Airport in the presence of the international press corps, they understood that world public opinion alone is a weak restraint on the behavior of despots.

Almost everyone in the country assumes that Marcos is responsible for the assassination—it is true to his style, his politics and his history. Murder, torture and brutality—extensively detailed by Amnesty International and other human rights organizations—have been the hallmarks of his presidency, especially since 1972, when he suspended elections and decreed martial law.

But what remains puzzling is why Marcos ordered his main political rival to be liquidated—"salvaged," in the hideous idiom current in the Philippines—in such a brazen fashion. Probably he believed that the assassination was the best response to the growing number of political problems he faces. And he thought he could get away with it.

The critical factor here is the full support given him by the Reagan Administration. In June 1981, George Bush visited Manila and toasted Marcos as "an adherent of democratic rights and to the democratic processes." The bottom line to that compliment was a grant of $900 million in military aid, which the United States promised as part of a new agreement securing its vast installations at Subic Bay and Clark Air Force Base. It was enough money to give Marcos the confidence that he could get away with murder.

American support for the Marcos dictatorship did not begin with the Reagan Administration. Advised by Henry Kissinger to pay Marcos the price he asked, Presidents Nixon and Ford strenuously opposed Congressional attempts to cut off or reduce aid on human rights grounds. Nor did Jimmy Carter, who made human rights the centerpiece of his Third World foreign policy, shrink from paying Marcos $500 million for base rights in 1979.

Volatile social conditions produced by severe economic depression and heavy-handed political repression constituted the domestic background of Aquino's assassination. There is evidence that Marcos is becoming desperate because his police and terror tactics have failed to still all opposition. No longer are only peasants and workers among the "disappeared." The brutality now extends to the middle class. Even outspoken members of the Catholic clergy are not exempt from "salvaging" operations.

Aquino's stated reason for returning to the Philippines after three years in the United States was to defuse the tension between an increasingly restive population and the isolated dictatorship. His method was to press for two-man negotiations for a "return to constitutional democracy." That was necessary, he said, to head off revolution. Liberal policy makers in the United States—the old Carter wing of the State Department—saw Aquino as the last, best hope for forming a pro-American, anticommunist government that might head off the looming Philippine tragedy.

But Aquino may have been too late. Revolutionary movements appear to be growing in the archipelago; their followers are more interested in reforming the land-tenure system and the class structure than in restoring pre-Marcos political processes. They are also calling for independence from U.S. domination. As America's only former colony, the Philippines is especially sensitive about its role as a U.S. strategic and corporate outpost.

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President Reagan will decide in a few weeks whether he will honor his commitments to Marcos. In particular, he will consider his planned trip to Manila in November, and his support for the $900 million aid package, which will go before a hostile Congress. It's hard to believe that Reagan, given his taste for authoritarian dictators faithful to the United States, will backtrack. But it is also hard to see how he can win with Marcos over the long distance.

WALDEN BELLO AND JOEL ROCAMORA

Walden Bello and Joel Rocamora are associates of the Southeast Asia Resource Center, based in Berkeley, California.

The War Museum

Last summer, New York City acquired a new tourist attraction. The forty-year-old aircraft carrier Intrepid was opened as a sea-air-space museum. The newspaper ads promised "Adventure. History. Technology. Tomorrow. Excitement. America."

One bright morning recently, I visited the Intrepid. Twelve buses were parked at the pier and the place was crawling with schoolchildren, mostly boys. On the Intrepid's 900-foot-long flight deck are aircraft and models of the ships that constitute a present-day attack carrier battle group. There is a theater which features regular showings of a twenty-minute film, *Air Power at Sea*. The narration, by actor Cliff Robertson, describes the typical modern carrier as "the big punch in the most awesome array of offensive and defensive weaponry ever put together . . . a self-sustaining mobile fortress, its primary role to project U.S. air power, nothing more, nothing less." Its A-6 Intruder jets "carry a bomb load second only to the B-52." This cinematic celebration of military power was produced by the Grumman Aerospace Corporation, which manufactures many of the aircraft used on the carrier Nimitz.

A photographic display depicting the Navy's various missions boasts that America possesses "a fleet of nuclear subs armed with Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles." Elsewhere, there is a full-size model of a Tomahawk cruise missile with a sign proclaiming that it was "adapted to deliver various types of payloads from air, sea and submarine launch. . . . Manufacturer General Dynamics/Convair. Range 350 miles (tactical). 2210 miles (strategic). Speed 550 mph."

Other exhibits describe the Intrepid's role in World War II and the history of naval aviation and space exploration. Such information is of educational value, but these exhibits convey, overtly and subliminally, the message that military power is good in itself, which did not strike me as a suitable one for children—or adults. Equally repugnant to me was the way many exhibits promote the interests of the military contractors whose names are displayed with their wares.

A private museum may exhibit anything it likes. P.T. Barnum once displayed a "mermaid" that was actually a manatee. But the Intrepid is not a roadside snakehouse. New York City spent $2.4 million renovating the pier where the Intrepid is moored. It obtained a $4.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for pier improvement, based, in part, on the 469 jobs the museum would generate. Furthermore, the Intrepid Museum Foundation, which runs the museum, could not raise the money it needed to renovate the carrier until the State Board of Regents had incorporated it as a not-for-profit educational corporation, enabling it to sell $15.2 million in tax-exempt bonds.

Under New York State law, only institutions "whose approved purposes are, in whole or in part, of educational or cultural value deemed worthy of recognition and encouragement" may be chartered. One of the approved purposes of the Intrepid Museum Foundation is "to foster through memorial and scientific exhibits and activities, respect for our national institutions and our history and the role of our armed forces in protecting our liberties."

In a world under the threat of nuclear destruction, we cannot ignore the consequences of simple-minded reliance on force or the insidious effects of the permanent war economy. Nowhere at the museum are those issues discussed. Nuclear holocaust is never mentioned. For all any visitor to the United States Navy Hall would know, the "awesome array" of weaponry on the Nimitz is as harmless as a video game. A truly educational exhibit should describe the devastation nuclear weapons can cause—not to mention the destruction wrought by napalm and cluster bombs in recent wars (the Intrepid served three tours of duty off Vietnam). Furthermore, the charters New York State grants to educational corporations prohibit their devoting a "substantial part" of their activities to "propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation." Defense appropriations are legislation. The Grumman film and the photographic display are propaganda.

The Intrepid Museum Foundation's charter is temporary. It comes up for renewal next April. As a condition of renewal, the State Board of Regents should require that the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum teach the realities of the nuclear age.

JAMES MUNVES

James Munves is a freelance writer and a contributor to The New Yorker.

DISPATCHES FROM AFRICA

This week's "Dispatches" focuses on southern Africa, which is not surprising since our guest columnists, Michael Fleshman and James Cason, are the former editors of the publication by that name. After eighteen years of covering the unfolding liberation struggles in the region, *Southern Africa* is no more, a victim of rising costs, shrinking revenues and indifferent institutional funders whose priorities lie elsewhere. It will be sorely missed. In the future Fleshman and Cason will contribute articles on significant developments in southern Africa. The regular holders of the "Dispatches" franchise, Kai Bird and Max Holland, will return in October.

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DISPATCHES.

■ SOUTH AFRICA: The New Opposition

"The Changing Face of South Africa," the ads proclaim in bold type. They go on to describe the constitutional reforms proposed by the government and to claim those reforms have won the support of every sector of South African society. But what the advertisements, part of a government-sponsored campaign in U.S. newspapers, fail to mention is that the chief effect of the constitutional proposals has been to galvanize the opposition at home.

In late May, thirty-two anti-apartheid groups meeting in Johannesburg formed the United Democratic Front (U.D.F.) specifically to fight the government's proposed reforms. The front calls the reforms inadequate because they allow only Indians and people of mixed race a modicum of political participation, leaving South African blacks, the overwhelming majority of the population, outside the political process.

A few weeks after the U.D.F. was formed, the Azanian Peoples Organization (AZAPO), a black community group based in Soweto, South Africa's largest black township, sponsored a two-day forum "to look at ways and means of achieving closer working relationships between organizations within the black community." One outcome of the Soweto meeting was the establishment of a permanent National Forum, which will work to achieve socialism in South Africa. The National Forum adopted a manifesto which assigns the working class a central role in the campaign:

> Our struggle for national liberation is directed against the system of racial capitalism which holds the people of Azania [South Africa] in bondage for the benefit of the small minority of white capitalists and their allies, the white workers and the reactionary sections of the black middle class.

The most important difference between the two new opposition groups involves the role they envision for whites in the black liberation movement. The U.D.F. favors allowing whites to participate as equals, while the National Forum, whose roots lie in the black-consciousness tradition that was a major ideological force behind the 1976 student uprisings in Soweto, believes blacks must lead the struggle because of their historic sufferings under apartheid.

But the differences between the U.D.F. and the National Forum are overshadowed by their common opposition to the constitutional proposals, which the U.D.F. calls a "devious scheme to divide the people." The South African dissenters know that the "changing face of South Africa" is a mask concealing the familiar visage of white supremacy.

■ SOUTH AFRICA: The Rikhoto Case

For those needing evidence that South African Prime Minister P.W. Botha's promises of reform are more public relations than public policy, consider the ingenious way his government circumvented a legal ruling that would have enabled many black contract workers to live with their families. On May 30, the Supreme Court struck down a provision of South Africa's "influx-control" laws, which limit the number of blacks living and working in the 87 percent of the country reserved for whites. Under these laws, all black urban workers fall into one of two categories: permanent residents, who have the right to live in the sprawling black ghettos that ring the white cities, and migrant workers, who may reside in the cities only for the duration of their one-year employment contracts.

The laws confer permanent resident status on all blacks who are born in the cities, but under Section 10(1)B, a migrant laborer who had been continuously employed for ten years by the same firm could also gain that status. In 1968, the government closed that loophole by decreeing that migrant workers must renew their contracts at their place of birth, which meant they had to take time off from their jobs and travel to their rural homelands. That time off, the government held, constituted a violation of the Section 10(1)B requirement of continuous employment—even if a worker's employer intended to renew the contract.

It was this Catch-22 interpretation of Section 10(1)B that the high court struck down in May, after a challenge by Mehlolo Tom Rikhoto, one of the estimated 800,000 migrant laborers in South Africa. Like 143,000 other migrants, he had worked continuously for the same employer for at least ten years. Although the decision left the influx-control laws intact, it did hold the government to the letter of Section 10(1)B. Hundreds of thousands of married migrants living in single-sex hostels would have been able to bring the families they left behind in the rural bantustans to the cities.

Rather than incur Washington's wrath by annulling the Rikhoto decision, the South African government made permanent resident status contingent on the availability of "approved accommodation" in the urban ghettos. Given the desperate shortage of urban housing for blacks—an estimated 300,000 additional units are needed—the government's action insures its continuing ability to limit the size of the urban black population. As the South African *Financial Mail* noted on July 1, "If Section 10(1)B was highly restrictive, the new provision will be even more so. The right to family life will hinge on the availability of approved accommodation and the decision of officialdom to make such accommodation available." Minister of Cooperation and Development Peter Koornhof, who is in charge of enforcing the influx-control laws, has said that approved accommodations for only about 5,000 families are now available.

■ NAMIBIA: PIG in a Poke

According to the Reagan Administration, independence for the mineral-rich territory of Namibia is just around the corner. Jeane Kirkpatrick, U.S. representative to the United Nations, has said that "only two major issues remain to be resolved" (the composition of the supervisory force and the kind of electoral system Namibia will have) before South Africa relinquishes its sixty-year hold on the territory it calls South-West Africa. Chester Crocker, President Reagan's chief adviser on African affairs in the State Department, has also predicted that a settlement is at hand. The "sole remaining major issue" as far as he is concerned is the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.

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MICHAEL FLESHMAN AND JAMES CASON

But South Africa is clinging stubbornly to its western neighbor. Five years ago, the U.N. Security Council approved a plan that provided a framework for a U.N.-supervised transition to independence. South Africa, however, has raised all manner of objections, preventing the plan from being put into effect.

Pretoria's latest moves show up the hollowness of two years of "quiet diplomacy" by the Reagan Administration. The recently appointed Administrator General, Willie van Niekerk, who serves as a kind of colonial governor, is busily laying the foundation for a South African-sponsored "internal settlement" as a way of bypassing the U.N. plan. In late July, he issued a proclamation that established an advisory State Council composed of Namibian political and business figures, and charged it with drawing up guidelines for a future government.

South Africa fears that the Namibian liberation organization SWAPO (South-West Africa People's Organization) would easily win a free election under international supervision, and Prime Minister P.W. Botha has said that a SWAPO victory at the polls would be unacceptable to his government.

Pretoria envisions the State Council becoming a puppet government in the territory—a successor to the discredited tribal parliament, which was dissolved in 1982. It would also serve as a forum through which handpicked politicians loyal to South Africa could gain public exposure. Most Namibians, however, aren't buying the plan. Local wags have dubbed it "Permanent Interim Government"—PIG, for short.

■ MOZAMBIQUE: Diplomatic Turnaround

Relations between the United States and the socialist Peoples Republic of Mozambique, icy since the FRELIMO government expelled several U.S. diplomats on spying charges in 1981, are beginning to thaw. Last year, Washington quietly resumed shipments of food to Mozambique, which is suffering the worst drought in memory. The Mozambicans also credit the Reagan Administration with initiating two meetings between representatives of FRELIMO and South Africa aimed at reducing regional tensions. Peter Jon de Vos, a diplomat with experience in Portuguese-speaking Africa and Latin America, will soon be named U.S. Ambassador to Maputo.

A further sign of improving relations was the meeting in New York City in May between Mozambique's Foreign Minister, Joachim Chissano, and Secretary of State George Shultz. Chissano later favorably contrasted Shultz's low-key style with Alexander Haig's cold-war rhetoric, and he announced that Mozambique would open an embassy in Washington.

Secretary Shultz's charm aside, both countries have strong reasons for restoring normal diplomatic relations. Maputo views the Reagan Administration as the only brake on South African aggression and destabilizing activities in the region, and hopes Washington will pressure Pretoria to reduce its support for the anti-FRELIMO guerrillas operating throughout most of Mozambique. FRELIMO leaders are also looking for increased U.S. economic aid and for private investment in their country's ailing economy.

The Reagan Administration has realized that the Mozambicans cannot be battered into submission by the South African Army. Washington now fears that if the attacks continue, FRELIMO may call upon Cuba and the Eastern European nations for military aid. Above all, the Administration wants FRELIMO to stop African National Congress guerrillas from entering South Africa through Mozambique. By denying A.N.C. fighters access to Mozambique and the other "frontline" states that border on South Africa, Washington hopes to guarantee the security of the apartheid regime and to protect U.S. economic and political interests there. Neither Washington nor Maputo is likely to get all it wants, but the threat of a full-scale regional war has given each an incentive to talk.

■ SOUTH AFRICA: Divestiture Could Hurt

"Over the past decade, American corporations with subsidiaries and affiliates in South Africa have become a force for change," Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Lawrence Eagleburger said recently. "The activities of these firms have had an impact far beyond the book value of U.S. investment in South Africa."

Apparently the Under Secretary hasn't been reading his departmental mail. According to a secret cable prepared by the U.S. Consulate in Johannesburg, private American investment support for the South African regime is far greater than previous estimates showed it to be. The cable was obtained by Trans Africa, a black-American lobbying group, and given to Jack Anderson, who published portions of it in his column. It reports that U.S. financial involvement in South Africa comes to $14.6 billion, far in excess of the widely accepted figure of $2.6 billion.

For many years, black South Africans have urged the international financial community to withdraw its money from their country, in hopes of undermining the white minority government by weakening its economic base. Many Americans have responded to that call. State legislatures, universities, religious groups and labor unions have put pressure on corporations to pull out of South Africa.

U.S. business leaders argue that the American role in South Africa is small and that a corporate pullout would have little impact on the South African economy. But according to the State Department cable, Americans own 57 percent of all foreign-held shares of stocks listed on the Johannesburg exchange. The total value of these shares is an estimated $7.6 billion. When added to the $4 billion in loans from U.S. commercial banks and the close to $3 billion in direct investments, American involvement in South Africa's economy approaches $15 billion. The cable notes that U.S. groups pressuring American companies that do business in South Africa and banks that lend to South Africa are "aiming at only the tip of the iceberg."

The cable concludes: "All of this suggests that the potential for U.S. disinvestment could be more important to the South African economy than we had previously assumed."

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ARTICLES.

WHAT THE FILE TELLS

The F.B.I. and Dr. Einstein

RICHARD ALAN SCHWARTZ

At the conclusion of *Hamlet*, as bodies lie strewn about the stage, Horatio announces to Fortinbras that he shall hear "Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,/Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,/Of deaths put on by cunning and forced cause,/And, in this upshot, purposes mistook/Fall'n on th'inventors' heads. All this can I/Truly deliver." The file of some 1,500 pages that the Federal Bureau of Investigation accumulated on Albert Einstein between 1932 and 1955, copies of which I obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, contains a litany of horrors as long and as unusual, though not so gory. The eminent physicist is accused of running an espionage ring, of being the "brain" behind the alleged Communist push to take over Hollywood, of inventing a miracle ray, of being behind the Lindbergh kidnapping and of devising a robot able to read human minds and exercise thought control.

Most of the information in the file is far more mundane. There are clippings and summaries of newspaper and magazine articles, many of them on Einstein's leftist politics. There are tedious enumerations of all the organizations to which the physicist belonged or lent his name that had been labeled subversive or Communist. Frequently repetitious, the reports in the file are never explicitly judgmental. Nonetheless, the principals of selection the Bureau employed reveal at least a suspicion that Einstein's outspokenness about world peace, civil liberties, disarmament and racial equality was evidence of his Communist ties. Some of the reports are concerned with the Bureau's suspicions that he had been involved, at least indirectly, in Soviet espionage activity, and perhaps still was at the time of the investigation.

Although the F.B.I. had collected information on Einstein since 1932, it did not begin its official investigation of him until the 1950s. An internal memorandum dated February 15, 1950, from D.M. Ladd, an F.B.I. agent, to F.B.I. Director J. Edgar Hoover summarized all the information on Einstein collected by the Bureau to date. That Hoover requested such a summary suggests a concern about Einstein's activities at the highest level. It is difficult to ascertain why Hoover did so, however, since thirteen pages in this part of the file were deleted by the Bureau under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act that allow government agencies to withhold the identities of informants and living people, and information whose release could be detrimental to national security. Whatever interested Hoover in Einstein initially, the focus of the investigation quickly turned to espionage. Below a section titled "Contacts and Associates" in the February 15 summary (deleted by the F.B.I. on the above grounds), there is an uncensored handwritten note initialed by Hoover that reads: "We should develop this. I have seen somewhere Einstein was the one who suggested Fuchs [*sic*] assignment to live in England. What about this?" In another note on the same page, Hoover wrote: "Also I recently saw a statement to the effect that a member of his family was in Russia. I think it was his son."

On March 10, 1950, Ladd sent another memorandum to Hoover. In it he put to rest the belief that Albert Einstein Jr. was in the Soviet Union (not permanently, however, since allusions to the son behind the Iron Curtain persist in subsequent reports). Ladd also promised to "develop" information linking the British atomic spy Emil Klaus Fuchs to Einstein, though he said that Einstein did not request Fuchs's assignment to England. The memorandum reports that Fuchs "was a brilliant scientist who had left his native Germany and had become a British subject; that Einstein had sent for him to help work on the atom bomb and that he had then recently returned to England." Ladd cited a newspaper interview with Fuchs's father, who claimed his son had been released from a Canadian internment camp for aliens after Einstein, unaware that he was a Communist, intervened on his behalf. According to the father, Einstein had been impressed by Fuchs's paper on nuclear energy and had considered him valuable to the Allied war effort.

With these tentative links between Einstein and Fuchs established, the Bureau took quite seriously subsequent charges that Einstein might be, or might have been, a spy. In early 1950, a German woman named Emma Rabbeis sent a letter to the State Department in which she claimed to be "in a position to make very positive statements to you concerning [Einstein's] political activity during the years of his residence in Berlin. I can also give you most exact information about the particulars of a woman with whom Einstein collaborated internationally." The letter was forwarded to Hoover's office, which in turn forwarded it and an English translation to the director of Army Intelligence on April 5, requesting that he investigate the matter. (The F.B.I. presumably ceded jurisdiction to the Army because Rabbeis lived in Berlin.) A counterintelligence agent interviewed her on June 22, and on July 31 Hoover received a summary of his findings. The report dismissed Rabbeis's accusations as hearsay.

She said that in the 1930s she had operated a Berlin dress shop that was frequented by a Baroness von Schneiderglend, whose entire family were communists. According to Rabbeis, Einstein and the Baroness's daughter had been fellow passengers on a voyage to America in the 1930s, and both had created a stir when they refused to stand during the playing of the German national anthem. That incident was Rabbeis's "proof" that Einstein was a communist. Rabbeis

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added that she believed Einstein was the father of von Schneider-glend's illegitimate child. Further questioning by the agent elicited a possible motive for Rabbeis's charges: she had devised a mathematical formula for winning the Berlin lottery and had sent it to Einstein for his comments. He had not replied.

Although Rabbeis's accusations were readily dismissed, the cover letter to the report notes, "However, information which emanated from former well placed K.P.D. members regarding Einstein's past activities is presently being checked and the European Command will forward a detailed report." This is the first reference to an espionage investigation based on the theory that from 1929 to 1931 Einstein's Berlin office was used as a "drop" for telegraph messages from Soviet agents in the Far East, a theory which the F.B.I. and Army Intelligence not only took seriously but later represented as fact. The suspicion triggered a four-year investigation by the F.B.I. and Army Intelligence, which was dropped shortly before Einstein's death for lack of corroborating evidence.

The spy charges against Einstein were brought by an informant whom Army Intelligence described as "usually reliable—possibly true." (As late as 1955, though, his identity was apparently unknown to the F.B.I., since an internal memorandum from that year identifies him as "an unnamed source.") The charges are summarized in an Army Intelligence report dated January 25, 1951, which was sent to the F.B.I. The informant alleged that Soviet agents sent coded telegrams to Einstein's Berlin office, where they were not noticed because of the large amount of international correspondence he received. He claimed they were intercepted by Einstein's chief secretary, a Communist agent, who passed them to Soviet couriers, who took them to Moscow. The source said that Einstein might have been unaware of this activity, since his secretary forwarded the telegrams before he could have seen them, but he believed Einstein might have known about it. Once, when his secretary was on vacation for several weeks, Einstein was allegedly handed the messages along with the rest of his mail. The source pointed out that a person who discovers his office is being used for unofficial purposes would most likely question his staff. Einstein did not do so, and the use of his address by Soviet spies continued, the informant claimed.

He also claimed that Einstein's entire Berlin staff of typists and secretaries had been recommended to him by the Klub der Geistesarbeiter (K.d.G.), the Club of Scientists, which was a Communist front, and he alleged that Klaus Fuchs had been a member. The informant believed that Einstein's chief secretary, whose name he could not recall, had a close, "probably intimate" relationship with a member of the Communist International Apparate" [*sic*], and that this affair, along with her communist sympathies, had drawn her into the conspiracy. According to the January 25 Army Intelligence report, "the information given by the source, as far as it goes, is probably accurate. On all points every effort was made to avoid generalities, which have been used only where detailed knowledge was not available." The source also provided the names of K.d.G. members and descriptions of their contacts, and claimed that several had been liquidated by the Russians in the purges of the mid-1930s.

The wealth of detail the informant supplied lent credence to his testimony, so much so that a subsequent F.B.I. report that was transmitted to the Immigration and Naturalization Service stated flatly, in a section titled "Synopsis of Facts": "Einstein's office in Germany was used as a telegram address by Soviet Apparate [*sic*] in the early 1930s." That allegation led to a series of F.B.I. investigations intended to identify Einstein's chief secretary as well as to locate people whom the source had named or who had known the scientist or lived near him at the time. Those were difficult tasks, since the investigators did not want to question Einstein or his current secretary and housekeeper, Helen Dukas, directly. Also, most of the people the F.B.I. sought had been killed in World War II or were missing or living in the Soviet sector of Berlin.

The Bureau's suspicions eventually turned to Helen Dukas, who had emigrated to the United States with Einstein. The F.B.I. suspected, but was never able to establish, that she had been Einstein's chief secretary from 1929 to 1931. She is depicted in several reports as being sympathetic to communism and as having communist acquaintances, but no specific allegations against her were ever made. On October 9, 1954, more than three years after the charge that Einstein's office had been used as a drop by Soviet agents was first made, the Newark office of the F.B.I., which was stymied in its investigation, recommended to Hoover that Dukas be interviewed directly. Hoover authorized the interview in a letter dated January 30, 1955, ordering that it "be conducted by experienced agents who must thoroughly familiarize themselves with all details and personalities mentioned in the Dukas and Einstein cases." The F.B.I. chief also suggested that the interviewers approach Dukas on the pretext that they were seeking information about individuals who had lived in Germany, not investigating her.

The interview took place three weeks later, in accordance with Hoover's suggestions. Dukas is described as being "extremely friendly and appear[ing] quite sincere in her answers. She did not appear to be evasive in any manner, but spoke quite freely. . . . At no time did she give any hint or indication that she was aware the investigation concerned her in any way." Dukas recognized only one of the names the Army Intelligence source had provided. She said she had never heard of the K.d.G., and described herself as apolitical and concerned only with Einstein's well-being. Most significant, she stated that Einstein worked at home and had no office in Berlin, and that she was his only secretary during the period in question, though his wife sometimes helped her with his correspondence.

In a cover letter accompanying his account of the meeting, the agent who interviewed Dukas observed that her recollection "in itself tends to discredit the allegations by G-2's [Army Intelligence] source, who furnished the information that Einstein's office had a staff of secretaries and typists." The agent addressed a recurring concern of the

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Bureau in his report: "It is also to be noted that the interview has identified Einstein's children and their current whereabouts, discounting any possibility of children being held behind the Iron Curtain as possible hostages of the Soviets." He concluded:

> It is believed that additional investigation is not warranted in view of the long lapse of time since Einstein's office was allegedly used by the Soviets, the lack of corroborating information, and the fact that personnel involved are scattered in many countries and in many cases are deceased. Therefore, both the Dukas case and the Einstein case are being closed in the Newark Office, and will not be reopened on the basis of this allegation, unless advised to the contrary by the Bureau.

An April 26, 1955, memorandum from the Los Angeles office to Hoover concludes this part of the investigation: "In view of the announced death of Albert Einstein on 4/18/55, this office contemplates no further investigation without the specific request of the Bureau or Newark office."

Around the time the story of the Berlin message drop first reached Hoover's desk, the Bureau received other information about Einstein's purported Communist connections. On February 23, 1950, the radio commentator Walter Winchell forwarded a letter from one of his listeners containing a list of seventeen "commie fronts" to which Einstein allegedly belonged in 1947. In July, Winchell sent the F.B.I. another letter concerning Einstein's Communist affiliations.

Of greater urgency was the Immigration and Naturalization Service's request for a "report as to the nature of any information contained in any file—other than fingerprint records—which your Bureau may have concerning the following person." The form letter, dated March 8, 1950, and signed by District Director Karl I. Zimmerman, identifies Einstein as the subject of an I.N.S. investigation. On June 9, the F.B.I. asked the I.N.S. to "clarify the purpose" of the investigation of Einstein, "inasmuch as he is a citizen." On September 14, W.F. Kelly, Assistant Commissioner of the I.N.S., replied that "information available indicates that this naturalized person, notwithstanding his world-wide reputation as a scientist, may be properly investigated for possible revocation of naturalization." Included with Kelly's letter were two internal I.N.S. memorandums written by Zimmerman and dated June 14, 1950, and July 12, 1950. The first states that the I.N.S.'s interest in Einstein was triggered by an article in the Brooklyn newspaper *The Tablet*, which "would seem to indicate that an investigation should be conducted to determine whether there were activities on the part of the subject . . . which might justify the filing of a suit to cancel citizenship." Zimmerman summarizes the article, an exposé of Einstein's ties to groups listed by the House Committee on Un-American Activities as Communist or Communist fronts, and he dwells on Einstein's support of groups that opposed the fascists during the Spanish Civil War. The "evidence" against Einstein included the fact that he "was a sponsor of the Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign . . . and a pamphlet entitled 'Children in Concentration Camps.'" (H.U.A.C. classified the Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign as a Communist front in 1940.) The July 12 I.N.S. memorandum merely supplies the additional information that in 1932 Einstein participated in the First World Congress against War and Fascism.

On November 28, the F.B.I. responded to Kelly's letter with a report headed "RE: Albert Einstein," which informs the I.N.S. that "a check of the general indices of this Bureau failed to disclose that any investigation has been conducted by the F.B.I. pertinent to your inquiry." The report provides a five-page summary of Einstein's life, emphasizing his pro-communist political views, and concludes with a two-page list of organizations with which he was affiliated that were on the usual lists.

Although the Philadelphia office of the I.N.S. formally requested F.B.I. clearance to investigate Einstein and Helen Dukas in August 1950, it was never granted because the F.B.I. did not receive the letter—at least it had no record of it. The exchange of memorandums between the two agencies continued, culminating in a letter from Hoover to the commissioner of the I.N.S. dated February 12, 1952, in which Hoover assures the I.N.S. chief that "the Federal Bureau of Investigation does not interpose any objection to any investigation that the Immigration and Naturalization Service may desire to conduct concerning Albert Einstein and Helen Dukas, nor has the Federal Bureau of Investigation ever interposed any such objection." On February 23, the F.B.I. sent the I.N.S. a thirteen-page summary, which, among other things, represented as fact the allegation that Einstein's Berlin office had been used as a Soviet message drop. There is no information in the F.B.I. files on whether the I.N.S. took further steps in its Einstein investigation.

The exchange of information between the F.B.I. and the I.N.S. drew Hoover's attention to the fact that although the Bureau had collected more than a hundred pages of documents, it had not prepared an investigative report on Einstein. On January 10, 1952, Hoover sent a memorandum to the Newark office discussing the I.N.S. requests, which concluded:

> Bufiles [Bureau files] reflect that there has never been an investigative report prepared in the Albert Einstein case. Newark is therefore directed to prepare an investigative report, suitable for dissemination, containing all the pertinent data received to date on Albert Einstein.

Hoover's memorandum led to a more comprehensive effort, called a correlation summary, which was begun on February 25, 1952. When the summary was completed a year later, it filled 1,160 pages.

Purporting to be "a summary of information obtained from a review of all references to the subject contained in Bureau files except main file references," the mammoth report is a potpourri of facts and wild allegations. It contains, for example, a translation of Einstein's introduction to the German edition of Upton Sinclair's book on mental telepathy, *Mental Radio*. The subject of telepathy recurs eighteen pages later, in an interview with an informant who claimed to know someone who had been a victim of a mind-control robot that Einstein had allegedly invented. The in-

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terviewer later learned that either the source or her acquaintance had spent two years in an insane asylum.

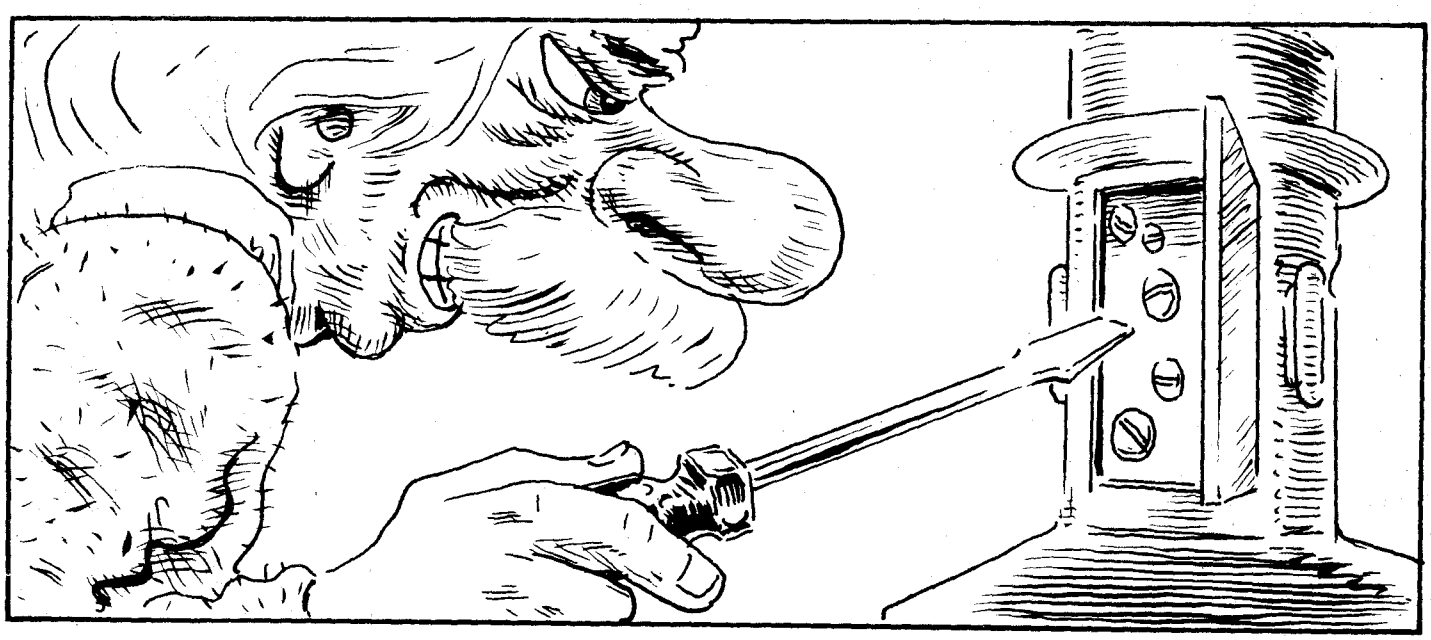
The report also contains a letter from a Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, patriot, who told the F.B.I. that at the November 1, 1938, meeting of a group called the Music Boys in New York City, a speaker had claimed that Einstein "is experimenting with a ray which will help us to destroy armed opposition—aircraft, tanks, and armored cars. He hopes that with it a dozen men could defeat 500. Through it 500 could rule a nation." Another reference to the ray appears in the Bureau's summary of a May 21, 1948, article in the *Arlington Daily*, which stated that Einstein and "ten former Nazi research brain-trusters" had met secretly and watched a beam of light melt a block of steel. According to the article, this new weapon could destroy entire cities. Following the summary is a paragraph stating that Army Intelligence had been told by its research and development group that the article had no basis in fact. A September 28, 1951, entry states that a caller told the Bureau that Einstein had framed Bruno Hauptmann, who had been convicted and executed for the Lindbergh kidnapping.

Someone who claimed to have been a story and advertising executive with D.W. Griffith Pictures from 1919 until the early 1930s, and executive head of the story department at RKO in the early 1930s, made an allegation the Bureau took more seriously. In a letter dated April 21, 1953, the informant described meeting an acquaintance at a fashionable portrait studio in the lobby of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. When asked how he could afford to pay the Ambassador's rent, the acquaintance replied that the studio was a Communist front. He tried for three hours to persuade the informant to cooperate with the Communist Party. Failing to do so, the acquaintance took him upstairs to Einstein's suite, explaining, "He's the one that never fails with the big shots." Einstein himself answered the door but said he was busy. Could the informant come back tomorrow? The informant did not return, however, and ignored subsequent warnings that "if I wanted to get ahead in Hollywood I had better play ball with him, that through Einstein they were getting control of every studio, and that if I didn't be sensible I might be through in Hollywood." The man claimed that within weeks he had lost his job and had four contracts canceled. He said that since then he had been unable to hold a job with a Hollywood studio for more than a few weeks before being fired.

This tale spawned an extensive investigation and a twenty-page report, which cited a reliable source who insisted that Einstein had never rented a suite at the Ambassador Hotel.

In an interesting twist, in 1940, Einstein, upon being interviewed by F.B.I. investigators, told them of his concern about the loyalty of another scientist, the Nobel Prize-winning chemist Peter Debye. A Dutchman named Feadler (the Bureau's phonetic spelling) sent Einstein a letter in the spring of 1940, accusing Debye, a former head of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Germany who was then lecturing at Cornell University, of possibly being a German spy. British agents intercepted the letter and brought it to Einstein. Einstein notified Princeton University Prof. Elia Lowe, who accompanied the agents to Cornell to discuss the matter with university authorities. Despite Lowe's advice to the contrary, the Cornell authorities told Debye of the charge against him. Debye subsequently wrote Einstein insisting that he was not involved in espionage. When the F.B.I. learned separately of the allegation, they questioned Einstein. While he was careful not to make any statements he could not substantiate and to point out possible benign interpretations of the charge against Debye, he expressed strong doubts about Debye's character and loyalty. Einstein told the F.B.I. that Debye should not be trusted with military secrets unless it was certain he had severed all connections with the German government, and he "made it clear that Debye should be watched for awhile to ascertain his motives."

One of the last documents in the F.B.I. file, a memorandum from W.A. Branigan, an F.B.I. official, to A.H. Belmont, an-



DRAWINGS BY ROBERT GROSSMAN

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other official, dated July 27, 1955, can serve as a summary of the case against Albert Einstein. The memorandum states:

> Investigation of Einstein instituted 1950 based upon information that he was affiliated with over 30 Communist-front organizations. Investigation reflected he sponsored entry into U.S. of numerous individuals with pro-Communist backgrounds. . . . Extensive investigation in U.S. showed Einstein affiliated or his name extensively associated with literally hundreds of pro-Communist groups. No evidence of C.P. membership developed.

The memorandum also discusses the Berlin message drop investigation, but it is difficult to say which was of greater concern to the Bureau, Einstein's alleged involvement in espionage or his open avowal of pacifism, civil rights and racial equality. His support of the Hollywood Ten and his advocacy of the abolition of the Thomas Committee on Un-American Activities are noted in his file. His support of populist Presidential candidate Henry Wallace is noted. His sponsorship of a testimonial dinner for W.E.B. DuBois is noted. His support of Willie McGee, a black man Einstein believed to have been framed on a rape charge, is noted, as is his support of the Scottsboro Eight. His friendships with leftists like Charlie Chaplin, Paul Robeson and Frank Lloyd Wright are noted. His articles in *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* advocating world government and a more humanistic, less militaristic approach to foreign policy are summarized. Included too are articles that question the veracity or importance of Einstein's scientific contributions, that relegate him to a mere copier of his scientific predecessors and that attack his religious views. Statements made by Einstein criticizing fascism that coincide with the views of the Communist Party appear in the file.

THE ISSUES ARE JOINED

Future Controversies in "The Nation"

World Government: An Idea Whose Time Has Returned? By Sidney Lens

Comments: Richard Falk, Kirkpatrick Sale, Paul M. Sweezy

Libel and the Press: Why Not a Right of Reply? By Aryeh Neier

Comment: Martin Garbus

F.O.I.A. Exemptions: Are the C.I.A. and the A.C.L.U. Strange Bedfellows? By Angus Mackenzie

Comment: Morton H. Halperin & Allan Adler

More Comments on *Beyond the Waste Land*

And Also—

Stephen Gillers: The Warren Court Never Died

Jamie Kalven: *Justice* Bork? (What He Thinks About the First Amendment)

Earl Shorris: While Someone Else is Eating (IV)

To the historian of science, the F.B.I. file on Einstein is significant for several reasons. First, it demonstrates the extent to which the government kept an eye on the most famous atomic scientist of the period. Moreover, it underscores the suspicion with which the government regarded his efforts to have the fruits of his research applied in a responsible, moral fashion. It also reveals something of Einstein the public figure, who inspired a mixture of awe and fear among ordinary people. The unsolicited letters accusing him not only of being a communist sympathizer but also of being a courier, a mastermind and a spy are most revelatory of that ambivalence.

What is so disturbing about the file is that it shows that, in spite of the apparent professionalism with which most of the investigations were conducted, there seems to have been a willingness, almost a desire, to presume that Einstein was guilty of *something*. That comes across in Hoover's obvious desire to find a connection between Einstein and Klaus Fuchs, in the Bureau's ready acceptance of the Army Intelligence source's claim that Einstein's office had been a message drop for Soviet agents, in its decision to invest so much time investigating the preposterous allegation that Einstein was the "brain" behind the alleged Communist push to take over Hollywood in the 1930s, and in the alacrity with which the Newark office reopened its investigation of Einstein after learning he had sent a confidential letter to Judge Irving R. Kaufman, the presiding judge in the Rosenberg espionage trial, on behalf of the defendants. The I.N.S.'s willingness to launch an investigation of Einstein on the strength of a single article in a right-wing newspaper is part of the same pattern.

From the standpoint of the taxpayer, the waste of public funds chronicled in these reports is appalling. The amount of money spent to pay the people who devoted countless hours to clipping newspaper items, typing summaries of public statements and following up absurd leads must have been enormous. Even granting that plausible suspicions of espionage should be pursued, only a relative handful of pages in the file deal with legitimate national security matters. The bulk of the material concerns Einstein's exercise of his rights of free speech and political expression, which should have little place in an espionage investigation. If he had been on the far-right end of the ideological spectrum rather than on the left, it is doubtful that the file on his political views would be nearly as extensive.

Perhaps most perplexing is the way in which history is ignored. The Depression, the rise of Nazism and World War II might never have happened as far as the F.B.I. was concerned. That someone might have supported communist causes during the 1930s in response to an economic crisis that represented at least a temporary failure of capitalism or to the spread of fascism is not even considered. The F.B.I. appears to have thought that a Communist or suspected Communist from the past is necessarily a Communist in the present, and just as necessarily a threat to the American system. More than anything else, the 1,500 pages of the F.B.I. file reveal how powerful and widespread that belief was. In the end, the file is not only a lode of information

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and innuendo about Albert Einstein; it is also a record of the F.B.I.'s mentality during the early 1950s. □

I wish to acknowledge the financial and intellectual support of the National Endowment for the Humanities. This project was conceived in a 1980 N.E.H. seminar conducted by Stephen Brush at the University of Maryland and completed in 1983 in a seminar conducted by Eugene Rochlin and Paul Thomas at the University of California at Berkeley. I wish also to thank Manfred Enssle of Colorado State University, who originated the idea of requesting the F.B.I. file on Einstein. The file was obtained under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, and the duplicating fees were paid by an award from the College of Arts and Sciences at Florida International University.

LETTER FROM EUROPE

How Many Masses Is Poland Worth?

DANIEL SINGER

"Oh God," Heinrich Heine wrote, "how big is your zoo!" This sentence kept popping into my head in June as I read the dispatches of my journalistic colleagues on Pope John Paul II's journey through Poland, apparently written on bended knees after having visions of the Black Virgin of Czestochowa. So strong was the spell they were under that they did not even raise an eyebrow when the Pope proclaimed that the right to form trade unions could not be granted by a government because it was "innate," inborn. It was not won by political struggle, he said, it was a gift from God. But if the right is innate, I wondered, why didn't the Catholic Church recognize it until well into the twentieth century, and then only in some countries? One felt mean-spirited quibbling over such matters while the Pope was being hailed not only by reporters but by millions of people in Warsaw and Wroclaw, in Krakow and Katowice, as the spiritual leader of Poland, the scourge of the military dictatorship and the main supporter of Solidarity.

After the extraordinary show was over and the enthusiastic crowds had gone home, *Osservatore Romano*, the official Vatican newspaper, in a too-candid editorial, revealed what the Pope's game really was. He had not gone to Poland to curse General Jaruzelski but to strike, or ratify, a complicated deal that would prop up the regime.

To say such a thing may get me in trouble. Not so long ago several allegedly left-wing readers practically accused me of being an agent of the Vatican because I insisted Solidarity was primarily a proletarian movement, despite the size of the cross Lech Walesa wears. Tomorrow the same people will warn people of the left not to be "more Catholic than the Pope," and to treat Jaruzelski at least as a partner, even if we don't bless him. Yet why should left-wingers follow in the footsteps of John Paul II? What sort of unholy bargain with Caesar did Cardinal Glemp work out, subject to papal endorsement? And if the Pope and the general did conclude an agreement, will they be able to implement it at the expense of Solidarity and over the heads of the Polish workers? To answer those questions we must understand the historical role of the Catholic Church in Poland.

Before World War II, the Polish church was one of the most reactionary in the world. It pandered to the rich, preached submission to the poor and appealed to widely held prejudices such as anti-Semitism. Paradoxically, the Catholic Church was weaker then than it is today, despite the close links it had with the state. (For example, couples who wanted to be married in a civil ceremony could do so only in the Free city of Danzig—Gdansk.) More than one-third of Poland's 35 million people belonged to ethnic or religious minorities: they were mainly Jews, Protestant Germans, Orthodox Byelorussians and Ukrainians. Arrayed in opposition to the reactionary church were the forces of the left—the Communists, the Socialists and a not negligible anticlerical intelligentsia. The power of the church was also potentially threatened by the very fact that it rested on the prejudices it fostered among a predominantly backward peasant population. (It was commonly believed in the countryside that Christ was Polish, because one was either a "true Pole" or a Jew, and God, it goes without saying, could not be Jewish.)

After the war, the situation changed dramatically. The ethnic and religious minorities had vanished: the Jews had been tragically exterminated, the Ukrainians and Byelorussians had been absorbed by the Soviet Union, and the Germans had been expelled. The new regime's early progressive measures, such as land reform and the elimination of capitalist property, thrust virtue upon the church by depriving it of some embarrassing backers. Instead of defending the interests of wealthy landlords, the church was relegated to representing peasant smallholders. The Stalinist postwar regime also helped the church by confusing ideological struggle for the minds of the people with coercion and repression of religion, including a ban on building new churches. Once pampered and now persecuted by the state, the church acquired a martyr's halo. The regime's mistakes and injustices in other areas helped the church regain its ancient role as a rallying point for resistance to an alien power.

Wladyslaw Gomulka, who returned to power in 1956, realized that the government had not used the most popular or the most efficient methods of handling the religious question. His policies transformed the relationship between the Communist Party and the church into a complex struggle for ideological supremacy, a contest which did not exclude concessions and compromises by both sides. In this battle of wits, the clergy, guided for years by the stubborn and wily Cardinal Wyszynski, scored points time and again, helped by blunders perpetrated by the state. In 1968, for instance, it was the world upside down: the Catholic university in Lublin offered teaching positions to academics who had been fired by a "communist" government because they were Jewish.

Daniel Singer is The Nation*'s European correspondent. He is the author of* The Road to Gdansk *(Monthly Review Press).*

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Two years later, when workers demonstrating in Gdansk were shot by "their" government, Wyszynski publicly endorsed their struggle. In 1976, when workers who had come out into the streets were again persecuted, he spoke out against their "exploitation," and the church extended its support to the dissident intellectuals who had sided with them. The church came to be regarded as the voice of civil society. A joke that circulated in the late 1970s is revealing. A nonbeliever emerging from a church is accosted by a friend and explains, "I didn't go for prayers but for opposition." The story reflects the church's pre-eminence among the opposition and also the intellectual disarray and bewilderment of the secular groups.

Under the puritanical Gomulka, party leaders preserved at least reputations for honesty and frugality. But his successor, Edward Gierek, urged the Polish people to follow François Guizot's slogan "Enrich yourselves," and many of his colleagues in the party hierarchy apparently decided to set an example. That enabled the clergy to pick up additional points for moral superiority. Besides the problem of corruption, Gierek's regime faced economic difficulties. After several fat years living on borrowed money came the lean ones. No longer able to deliver the consumer goods, the leadership decided to permit a papal visit to distract the Polish people. The triumphal homecoming of the Polish Pope in June 1979 was a measure of the political as well as the ideological bankruptcy of a regime that called itself Communist. By then the Polish United Workers Party (P.U.W.P.) was perceived by most Poles as an organ of oppression, injustice and inequality. And the church was seen as the symbol of resistance.

The revival of religious irrationalism is not peculiar to Poland. The provisional (one hopes) failure of socialism to change the world has created a vacuum which has been filled by the forces of unreason. Khomeini, Solzhenitsyn and Wojtyla, each in his own fashion, personify that trend. History, however, has its surprises as well as its ironies. The Pope's first visit to Poland also ushered in political change. Having been allowed to run the show during his visit, the Poles concluded that their masters were dispensable. That realization played a part in the events of the following summer, which led to an unprecedented victory for the Polish working class and to the government's recognition of Solidarity.

The religious and the secular seemed to merge when strikers splashed holy pictures all over the gate of the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk in 1980. For me the ambiguity was best illustrated when one of the members of the strike committee gave my wife, who comes from three generations of Breton anticlericals, an image of the Black Virgin on which he had inscribed "Madonna of the Strikers." But rising above this folklore one could see that something historically significant had happened—the labor movement was reborn. In August 1980, when Cardinal Wyszynski urged in a sermon that the Gdansk workers end their strike, there were no protests. With all due respect, the strikers totally ignored his advice.

The ideological hegemony the Catholic Church exercised over the workers' movement undoubtedly contributed to Solidarity's failure to produce a genuine socialist program. But that was only one element in a complex confusion resulting from a general identification of Marxism and socialism with the ruling regime. True, it should be mentioned that Walesa's chief adviser, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, belongs to the progressive and not the reactionary wing of the church. Catholics in Poland run the ideological gamut, from those on the left of Mazowiecki to the Red-hating, Jew-baiting priests on the right of Solzhenitsyn. The church as an institution, however, was bewildered by the rise of Solidarity. Until 1980 it had spoken for all segments of society. Now the labor movement had taken over the role of demanding concessions from the state, including those the church wanted. Cardinal Glemp, who became primate in 1981 after Wyszynski's death, tried rather awkwardly to act as a matchmaker between Walesa and Jaruzelski, hoping to prevent a collision. But the government remained obdurate. In December 1981, the P.U.W.P. announced its terms: it could share spiritual supremacy with the church but not temporal power with the workers.

The church's difficulties did not disappear with the intervention of General Jaruzelski's tanks. Glemp's sermons at the time of the military intervention will one day be studied for their odd counterpoint of moral resistance and political resignation. Admittedly, his dilemma was not a minor one. On the one hand, the church wanted to avoid a confrontation between the workers and the regime that would lead to bloodshed and Soviet intervention. It also had substantial real estate interests to protect—convents, monasteries, seminaries—and the regime was ready to pay more than a mess of pottage for its help in taming Solidarity. On the other hand, too open a collaboration with the authorities would have deprived the church of the prestige it had accumulated over the years. Glemp's approach was resented not just by laymen but by a good proportion of the lower clergy, and attendance at churches throughout Poland fell or rose depending on whether their priests preached sermons for or against the Glemp view. Nevertheless, more out of self-interest than love of the government, the episcopate chose to cooperate with it.

Last November, it looked for the first time as if the deal might come off. A month earlier, you may recall, Solidarity, hitherto suspended, was outlawed. Its underground leadership, after much wavering, called for a general strike in protest. On the eve of the strike, Glemp made a public appeal for law, order and labor discipline. Walesa was suddenly freed and there were rumors that martial law would soon be lifted. The strike was a flop. Conditions were ripe for a compromise between the sword and the cross. The Pope's second visit, which the Vatican had by then proposed, would thus coincide with the funeral of Solidarity.

What went wrong can only be guessed. The authorities were probably too greedy. They didn't lift martial law, only suspended it. They liberated some political prisoners without proclaiming a general amnesty. They began preparations for the trials of the dissident intellectuals of KOR and the regional leaders of Solidarity. Also, Lech Walesa refused to play the role of figurehead. The astute

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leader from Gdansk is too wise to believe that, like the church, he is eternal. Were he to collaborate with the government, he would quickly cease to be Poland's hero. In fact, since his liberation he has not made a single wrong move. He has expressed his sympathy for the underground movement and met secretly with its leaders, yet somehow managed to stay on the right side of the law.

Rapidly recovering from its setbacks, Solidarity sponsored massive May Day demonstrations throughout the country, proving that its gravediggers were premature. Above all, Jaruzelski was shown to be unable to break the Polish stalemate. While Solidarity can no longer paralyze the country with a strike, the regime cannot mobilize the workers on its side. According to the government's own inflated figures, the new puppet unions have less than 3 million members—one-third as many as Solidarity had. When John Paul II's plane landed on Polish soil on June 15, the political climate was far from what it had been in November. The Pope and the general could no longer negotiate as if they were the only actors on the political stage. Or couldn't they?

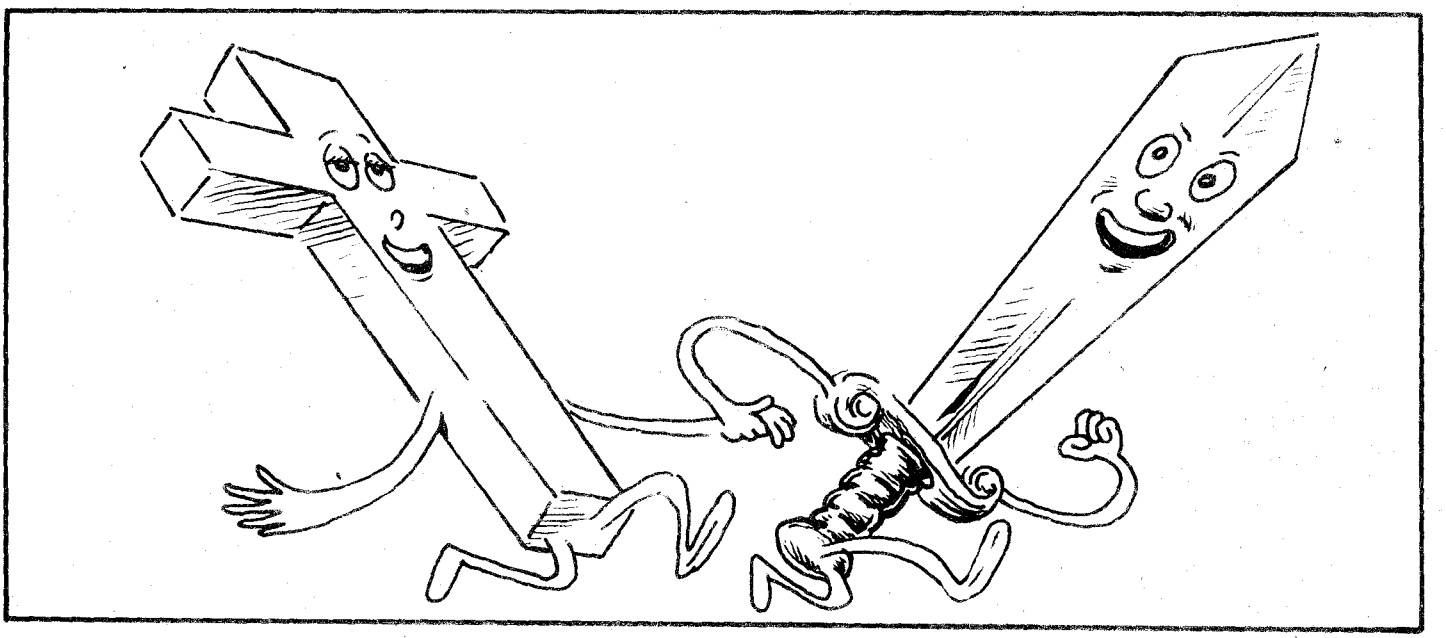
The Pope's speeches during his extraordinary pilgrimage were like the utterances of the Delphic oracle, their meaning subject to interpretation: truth was in the ear of the listener. The Western journalists covering the Pope's visit did not lie. They accurately reported which passages in his speeches were most heavily applauded. The huge crowds that flocked to the masses, turning them into political rallies, were highly partisan.

Whenever John Paul II made an allusion to, say, Saint Jadwiga repelling the Tatars, whenever he used the word "solidarity," whenever he mentioned Gdansk, the audiences responded with thunderous applause. When he unexpectedly met with Jaruzelski for a second time toward the end of his journey, Poles were puzzled. When his brief encounter with Lech Walesa received as little publicity from the Vatican as it did from the Polish government, they were perturbed. When they read extracts in Polish newspapers from the editorial in *Osservatore Romano* in which Father Virgilio Levi praised heroic sacrifice and called on Walesa to stand aside for the sake of "national reconciliation," Poles simply refused to believe what was happening.

And yet upon detached reading, the Pope's speeches yield different meanings from those the crowds cheered. He invoked the Gdansk agreements. So does the government. He called on the Virgin Mary to protect suffering Poland and exhorted Poles to stick to their moral principles. Spiritual resistance does not bother the regime, which does not want to be loved but simply tolerated as a lesser evil. And consider the political advantages it derived from permitting this pilgrimage! If the Polish Pope can shake hands with Jaruzelski, why can't Reagan or Thatcher? If the church can pump $2 billion into Polish farming, why should Western bankers not get out their checkbooks? The leaders of Poland could paraphrase the Huguenot Henry IV's dictum about Paris: Power in Warsaw is worth many a mass. Only one cannot say such things so crudely in public. Father Levi was dismissed at once for forgetting the art of Jesuitical circumlocution.

The question is not whether the church and the regime are trying to resume their former state of competitive coexistence, but whether they can make it work. Each side has its reasons not to seek a victory over the other. The Pope wants to consolidate the position of the church in his native Poland, to spread its influence throughout Eastern Europe and, if some reports are to be believed, to make forays into the Soviet Union through the Baltic states. The general wants Rome's tacit approval for domestic consumption and a certificate of good conduct to show to the West. Both the church and the party may want to conduct their dialogue privately, and without interference from an unwelcome newcomer—the proletariat.

There is a scene in Andrzej Wajda's film *Man of Marble* in which Birkut, the record-breaking bricklayer, goes to Warsaw to protest the arrest of his mate, who had fought in



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the Spanish Civil War. At the Ministry of the Interior he is greeted by a suave bureaucrat who assures him everything will be fine and dandy—just "don't take any initiatives." I confess that the scene did not strike me one way or the other when I first saw the film. Then I saw it a second time at a showing in Milan organized by *Il Manifesto* for local labor activists. They explained to me that the scene underscored their link with their comrades in the Soviet bloc. East or West, they said, proles are told the same thing: "Don't take any initiatives."

But the Polish workers have taken a hell of an initiative, and that is why it is now so difficult to make a deal over their heads. The attempt this July looks like a repeat of last November's failure. Before lifting martial law the government "reformed" the legal code by inventing a state of "economic and social emergency" and by altering the provisions concerning labor law and academic freedom. Who needs martial law when the same results can be obtained under "ordinary" laws? Suffice it to say that workers still face three-year prison terms for belonging to Solidarity, a banned organization. Similarly, the amnesty the government granted is selective: members of KOR and the "extremist" leaders of Solidarity remain behind bars. If the Pope finds this sufficiently miraculous, his image in Poland will be tarnished. If Cardinal Glemp accepts it as the official side of the deal, he may find himself unable to deliver his part of the bargain, particularly on the labor front.

There are two possible interpretations of the drama in Poland. First, the gloomy one. Beaten by the military wing of the self-appointed vanguard of the proletariat, led astray by their religious shepherds, the workers have had it. They will go home and lick their wounds, and Poland, at best, will return to normal for a long time. Then there is the optimistic view, which I share. It holds that the workers have become actors in their own drama and will not leave the stage so easily. An interlude of relative inactivity may even have some advantages for them. If there are genuine left-wingers in the West who have leaned toward the party and distrusted Solidarity because of its clerical connection, they may now have second thoughts. What is much more important, Poland's workers may shed some of their illusions about the political role of the church. As a result, when the Solidarity movement becomes active again, it will be no less powerful, but more soberly secular.

P.S. Why take on two churches at once? I am not a glutton for punishment, merely one of those dreadful nonbelievers who distrust all established churches and who, though not standing in the middle, receive blows from all sides. Last year I was described in these pages by Susan Sontag as an appalling apparatchik. This year I was accused by Doris Brin Walker, in a letter to *The Nation*, of being a cold warrior who takes the anti-Soviet line "in almost any article" I write. I would be worried by the charge were it not just a question of semantics. If being in favor of workers' councils is a sure sign of being "anti-Soviet," I must accept the label. I would only remind Walker that "soviet" in Russian means council. Heretically hers. □

DIPLOMATIC SACRIFICE?

Steven Mosher and The Politics of Cultural Exchange

JEFFREY LINCOLN

On September 30, the United Nations will present one of its annual Population Awards to Qian Xinzhong, chief of the Family Planning Commission of the People's Republic of China, in recognition of his country's vigorous and effective birth control and population planning programs. In the normal course of U.N. affairs, the ceremony would be an unexceptional event, population control being one of those international apple-pie issues about which there is little disagreement.

This year's award to the Chinese, however, has provoked considerable controversy because of reports in the Western press of forced abortions, female infanticide and mandatory sterilizations being carried out under the auspices of the government [see Jonathan Mirsky, "The Infanticide Tragedy in China," *The Nation*, July 2].

In the United States, an assortment of right-to-lifers, old China Lobby hands and New Right politicians have seized on the scandal as an occasion to attack U.S. détente with Beijing. In doing so, they have made considerable use of the work of Steven Westley Mosher, a former Stanford University graduate student in anthropology who did fieldwork in a Chinese village. In the course of his research, Mosher observed Chinese population control methods firsthand, and he later wrote a chilling account of what he had seen for a Taiwanese magazine. Even before the article appeared, his research in rural China had made him persona non grata to the Chinese. As a result of the furor, he was expelled from the doctoral program at Stanford under circumstances many thought violated academic freedom. This month, Mosher's book about his China experiences, *Broken Earth: The Rural Chinese*, arrives in the stores, and it should provide further ammunition for his partisans and critics alike.

The New York Times, *60 Minutes* and a number of specialized publications have examined the controversy surrounding Mosher's expulsion, but they all have missed one crucial point: the dismissal was a product of the highly politicized nature of cultural exchanges between the United States and China. The young anthropologist's abrasive behavior and flouting of protocol threatened to undermine those exchanges and destroy the complex political, economic and cultural ties the United States has designed to enmesh the Chinese in the affairs of the West.

Jeffrey Lincoln is a former Nation *intern attending Columbia University's graduate school of journalism.*

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September 3-10, 1983

In the wake of the Nixon-Kissinger "opening" of China in 1972, the United States to play on China's naïveté and its eagerness for with the West. The Chinese believed that exp s with the United States would be of enor their country. The United States encou and exploited China's fear of the process a new U.S. defense strategy diplomacy, he had become a security risk. advantage of the "China card." In a critical ways, Mosher threatened to y, and so he had to be sacrificed. In the

Steven Mosher one early spring afternoon in hotel room. He told me his China adventure arch 1979, when he was in Taiwan doing re- his doctoral dissertation comparing the socializa- cesses in fishing and farming villages. He spoke antonese and Mandarin Chinese, and was fluent in cal dialects. Maggie So, then his wife, was with him. A ve of Guangdong Province, she had emigrated to Hong ng as a young girl. Her family, however, still lived in a Guangdong village.

"I was astounded," he said, "when I got a call from G. William Skinner [a leading Sinologist], who was my academic adviser at Stanford, asking me to prepare a proposal for study in China on a U.S. government grant. At the time I was still only a graduate student, and you can't get lower in the academic hierarchy than that. And besides, there were established Sinologists who had been waiting thirty years to study in the People's Republic."

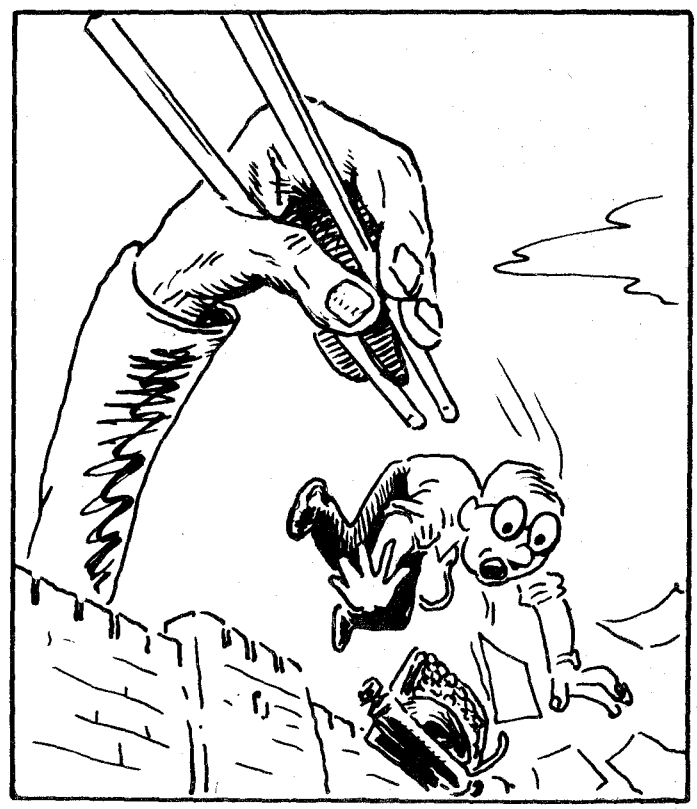
In due course, Mosher's grant proposal was approved, and because of family ties he was allowed to conduct his fieldwork in his wife's ancestral village, Starwood Brigade. Mosher was one of the first Western anthropologists permitted to study in rural China. He concentrated on collecting demographic data and information about the radical birth control policies China had instituted in January 1979.

"About four months into my research I was visited by a delegation of American academics, exchange program administrators and various Chinese officials [from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs]," Mosher told me. The group included John L. Jamieson, then the academic attaché at the U.S. Embassy in China and now a professor at the University of California at Berkeley. Mosher said he briefed them on his work in the village and told them about the social, political and economic data he was compiling from local and provincial sources. He said he had been apprehensive at first about mentioning the documents and data in front of the Chinese officials, but had been assured by the Americans that he could speak freely because they were "old and dear friends."

Mosher continued: "Jamieson called a few days later and said that he had a United States Information Agency official that he would like to bring out to the village to show him what I was doing. When they arrived, I again explained to them everything I had been doing in the village, going over in detail the official documents and data that I had collected." The data included population and class status registers, local police records, maps of the region and birth control records. According to Mosher, all of this helped paint an accurate picture of life in rural China. Scholars familiar with Mosher's work believe his findings may represent the most complete record of life in the Chinese countryside available in the West since the Communists took power thirty-four years ago.

When Jamieson and Norris Smith, the U.S.I.A. official, saw the materials they were "ecstatic," Mosher said. Jamieson told him, " 'This is why we selected you. Because we knew that you would be able to get a lot of stuff.' " Mosher claimed they warned him not to mention that the U.S.I.A. was helping fund his research, because "the Chinese might not understand." (Mosher's grant money came from the Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China. The committee, ostensibly an independent group, receives substantial sums from the U.S.I.A. and other government agencies. More than that, according to a committee official, the U.S.I.A. is the *sole* funder of the program under which Mosher received his grant.) Smith also cautioned Mosher not to take any documents out of the country because "the Chinese might consider it illegal to export such data."

Smith, now retired, told me that "Mosher was getting '*neibu*'—documents that would not be classified in the United States. Perhaps we would stamp them 'For Official Use Only,' or something like that. But to the Chinese these documents might be considered very secret. Of course this posed a dilemma for Mosher in how he was going to use, copy or export these documents."



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In a telephone interview, Jamieson said he had been "very enthusiastic" about Mosher's findings, and described what Mosher had accomplished in China as "very impressive." But he strongly rejected Mosher's contention that he had said "this is why we selected you," insisting he did not participate in the selection process. Jamieson was equally firm in rejecting Mosher's claim that he was warned not to mention his U.S.I.A. funding: "We are totally open with the Chinese on this point."

At any rate, Mosher says his troubles began with the visit of the American and Chinese officials. He suspects the Chinese became alarmed about his activities after they realized that his scholarly research would yield valuable intelligence for American policy makers. For example, China's population control programs will have far-reaching effects on the composition of Chinese society and the direction of Chinese politics for decades to come. While the vectors are still obscure, it may be possible to discover them by using data from a study at the village level, like Mosher's.

It is not unusual for agencies of the U.S. government to use social science field research for political and intelligence purposes. There is the example of Project Camelot, the Army-sponsored "scholarly" project in Latin American hot spots in the 1960s. Many academics who took money from the government believed they were conducting independent research. Actually, the government wanted the social and economic data they collected to inform American efforts to destabilize troublesome governments in the region.

By the time Mosher left China, "he was clearly driving the Chinese wild with the materials he was getting," a U.S. correspondent who was then in Beijing told me. "In a situation like that, what Mosher was doing rings all kinds of bells. The Chinese have an incredible sensitivity that, of course, the information Mosher was getting was being passed on to somebody. The Chinese have a fetish for security and regard all foreigners as spies—especially someone like Mosher, who was digging so deep. They usually respond by making wild accusations and calling you a spy."

The Chinese accused Mosher of trying to smuggle valuable old coins out of the country, of being in unauthorized possession of a van, of hiring a research assistant from Hong Kong without the government's permission, of bribing local officials with small appliances (toasters, for example) to obtain information of offering his house and van in exchange for data and of traveling to restricted areas.

Mosher was scheduled to leave Guangdong in June 1980; he applied to the Chinese government for an extension of his visa and was turned down. He decided to go to Taiwan to continue his doctoral studies and wait for an extension of his visa. Out of those reflections came an article, illustrated with provocative photographs, about women and his research. Out China's birth control program. "abuses" of the *Time* magazine of Taiwan, described how women—many of Taiwanese even nine months pregnant—were of it as

Chinese officials were furious; ticle political attack and complained Americans about Mosher's misconduct. One of the people they complain a Stanford University Sinologist and th dissertation committee. Another was Sinologist at the University of Califor had recently completed his own studies in

When Wolf and Potter returned to Califor layed the charges the Chinese had made to Stanf cials, who had already heard unfavorable comments f the academic community on Mosher's magazine article. Wolf and Potter conferred several times with William Skinner, who was incensed over the trouble Mosher was causing and worried that his actions would jeopardize the exchange program. Wolf and Skinner then joined forces and urged Clifford Barnett, chairman of the anthropology department, to take action. Barnett passed the problem on to the university administration, which bounced it back to him. The administration ruled that Mosher had not violated any standard of student conduct, but it suggested that the anthropology department determine whether he had violated some standard of "professional conduct."

There followed a Byzantine series of hearings, investigations by an ad hoc tribunal and administrative actions, the result of which was that Mosher was expelled from the doctoral program. In an appeal to Norman Wessells, dean of the School of Humanities and Sciences, Mosher argued that the anthropology department had "deprived me of the rights and other legal protections . . . permitting a faculty already prejudiced against me to conduct an unwarranted investigation, for which there is no provision under [university rules]." Wessells appointed a three-person faculty committee to review the decision, and on July 1, in accordance with the committee's recommendations, he upheld Mosher's expulsion.

Stanford's reasons for expelling Mosher have never been made public. University officials insist that they acted against him only on the basis of information supplied by the Chinese that had been substantiated. But a well-placed American journalist who spent considerable time in Beijing told me that the Chinese did not give Stanford any information and that all the "evidence" against Mosher came from American academics, exchange program officials and Maggie So, from whom Mosher is now divorced. She supplied especially

JOURNALISTS AND EDITORS' BRIEFING
Subject: The Soviet Union

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Important background information for journalists and editors on economic, political, social, military and journalistic conditions in the Soviet Union.

Includes a session, "The Experience of Covering the News in Moscow and Reporting and Editing It on the Outside," with former Moscow correspondents Craig Whitney, Marvin Kalb and Anne Garrels, and German television correspondent in Moscow Fritz Pleitgen. Also includes a session, "News Coverage of the Soviet Union From the Perspective of a Former Soviet Citizen."

Registration fee, including lunch, dinner, beverages: $150. For speakers' schedule and reservations, contact Marshall I. Goldman, Associate Director, Russian Research Center, Harvard University, 1737 Cambridge St., Cambridge, MA 02138, (617) 495-4485.

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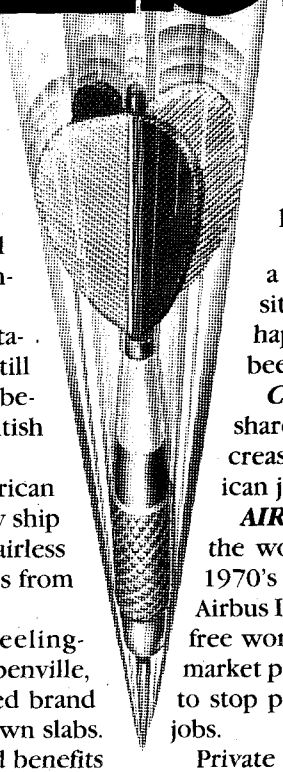
BULLSEYE



Brazil is the latest country seeking to sell hundreds of thousands of tons of subsidized steel slabs to an American steel company for finishing into steel products.

The slabs would replace steel made in America, further reduce our steelmaking capacity and throw out of work additional thousands of steel industry suppliers, steelworkers, and service employees in steel towns.

However, a Brazilian government representative said Brazil is "... being cautious and is still waiting to see the outcome of a similar deal between United States Steel Corporation and British Steel Corporation."

In earlier statements we warned the American public that if British Steel is allowed to annually ship 3 million tons of subsidized steel to U.S. Steel's Fairless Works, there would be a flood of cheaper deals from Brazil, Korea, and other countries.

Already, Brazil is negotiating with Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel to ship raw steel slabs to Steubenville, Ohio. The Steubenville Works has just installed brand new "state-of-the-art" equipment to make its own slabs. Workers there have taken deep cuts in pay and benefits to help their company modernize.

Still, Wheeling-Pittsburgh officials say, the Brazilian steel would be far cheaper. Steubenville's inland location, modern equipment, and substantially lower labor costs are all overcome by the Brazilian government's subsidy to its new steel industry.

What is happening in the steel industry is a dramatic example of the problem of international targeting of selected industries.

Through targeting, a government gives preferred treatment to a chosen industry—subsidizing its development in many ways until its products can be dumped on foreign markets at prices far below the true cost of production.

Because of our high consumption and lack of a national industrial policy, the United States is a sitting duck for these practices. Look at what has happened in some other industries which have been targeted:

COMPUTERIZED MACHINE TOOLS: Japan's share of this market in the United States has increased from 5% to 50% since 1976. 24,000 American jobs have been lost.

AIRBUS: Western European countries targeted the world commercial aircraft market in the early 1970's with the creation of a joint venture called Airbus Industries—which now accounts for half of the free world market for widebodied aircraft. This rapid market penetration contributed to Lockheed's decision to stop production of the L1011, with a loss of 4,000 jobs.

Private American business firms and workers cannot compete against the governments of foreign countries. Some American industries are simply disappearing. Others are falling far behind their subsidized foreign competitors.

Today we are faced with the very real threat of losing America's steel independence. If we do, much of our military power and economic base will also be lost.

Tomorrow, it could be *your* industry. It could be *your* job.

USA

Brazil Joins Britain In Attack On USA's Steel Independence

UNITED STEELWORKERS OF AMERICA

Lloyd McBride, President
Five Gateway Center
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damaging information about Mosher. As Clifford Barnett noted, "Everybody had an ax to grind with Mosher."

Stanford did try to check some of the allegations with the Chinese. In a letter to Zhao Fusan, an official at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Jane Collier, head of Stanford's ad hoc investigating committee, wrote, "Much of the information we have received on these charges has been indirect and secondhand, consisting of reports by American scholars. . . . We are at some disadvantage in trying to investigate events that took place within the People's Republic." But Zhao was no help; his reply consisted of a repetition of the gossip about Mosher that Stanford had already heard from the American scholars. Stanford says that those charges, widely reported in the press, were not the grounds for its decision to dismiss Mosher.

Not long after his expulsion, Mosher was invited to testify before the Senate East Asia Subcommittee, which was considering lifting human rights restrictions on U.S. aid to China. Jesse Helms, who sits on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the subcommittee's parent, wanted Mosher to testify about the abortion and infanticide horrors he had observed in China in hopes that would persuade the subcommittee not to remove the restrictions. But in a deft maneuver, China specialists at the State Department, who have worked for years to establish strong relations with the Chinese, had Mosher's testimony delayed and ultimately canceled. By insisting that Mosher be accompanied to any hearings by Eliott Abrams, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, and then making Abrams unavailable, Mosher was kept from testifying. His threat to the State Department's China policy was thus neutralized, and deprived of an official forum, he returned to Taiwan to resume his studies. Mosher told me he is baffled by the entire incident.

Stanford's action helped ease a tense diplomatic situation. China's anxieties about the role of U.S. scholars have been allayed by the message implicit in Mosher's expulsion—that indecorous intrusions into Chinese affairs will be censured.

Both the State Department and the Chinese government have reason to be pleased with the outcome of the affair. And so does Stanford, which had important interests at stake. It gains money, academic prestige and political influence as a result of being the pre-eminent American university conducting scholarly exchanges with China. All three agreed, at least tacitly, on a common goal: the sacrifice of Steven Mosher to save the cultural exchange program and the new China diplomacy.

The webbing of China continues apace. □

EXCHANGE.

(*Continued From Page 162*)

trial, I am pleased that Aronson has reminded us all of those valuable contributions to the widespread opposition to the death sentences, and, after the executions, to the long struggle for the freedom of Mort Sobell and the ongoing battle to expose the horrors of the original frame-up.

However, this additional information in no way detracts from my basic observation that *at the time of the arrests and the trial itself*, "most of the American left" failed "to respond to the indictments and arrests with a massive political and legal counteroffensive, or with any show of a mass opposition to the government's strategy." Aronson does not disagree with this observation, but his explanation for the lack of response seems to stem from the assumption that because of the massive government assaults and the many internal problems that beset the organized left, there were no functioning left organizations in the early 1950s other than the handful of "independent left publications." That assumption simply does not correspond to reality, and I would gently suggest that perhaps Aronson is slightly affected by the same problems of the "personal" historian that he warns me against.

Despite the government attacks and the left's internal problems, issues with which I deal at length in my forthcoming book, there were many thousands of us still functioning in left organizations throughout the country—in trade unions, factories, communities, universities and every area of life. In light of the problems now developing in the 1980s, it is essential to recognize the serious nature of the failure of most of us to respond immediately to the arrests and trial of the Rosenbergs and Sobell. As I said in the article:

> What was most tragic about the left's reaction to the trial was that it stemmed from a failure to understand that the very purpose of the government's case was to destroy the effectiveness of opposition to its cold war policies. But by not rallying a mass movement of support for the Rosenbergs and Sobell, the left, in the mind of the public, virtually accepted the prosecution's charges. It lost a chance to fight back, to begin undermining the government's plan to instill in the minds of Americans the idea that being a dissident, a radical or a Communist was the same as being a traitor and a spy.

Given the Reagan Administration's recent ominous moves in Central America and the Caribbean, and its attempts to re-create the cold war hysteria of the 1950s, it is more and more important for us to understand the lesson of those first days of the Rosenberg-Sobell frame-up. This is particularly necessary within the context of what I suggest is a carefully designed effort, thirty years after their executions, to open up a public campaign to establish that it wasn't a frame-up. And since the Rosenbergs were *really* "guilty" of espionage, liberals and progressives had better react cautiously to the efforts that loom on the horizon to project the same distorted image that all those who oppose the war moves of the military-industrial complex are really "Soviet," or today, "Cuban" agents—and they should accept the fact that government moves to re-create an atmosphere of fear and terror are perhaps, after all, necessary or justified, even if a little "overdone."

In light of these dangers, it is important to discuss broadly the conclusions of my *Nation* article:

> When people's movements fail to rally to the defense of individuals or organizations charged with frightful crimes out of fear of being identified with the victims, when they hesitate to fight back by exposing the conspiracy of the power structure, they implicitly accept the enemy's position and have little or no hope of victory. . . . We must not fall once more into the well-laid trap but, with courage and foresight, we must stand firm and, whatever the obstacles, find ways to launch a popular counteroffensive. For that offers the only real guarantee of victory.

People like Jim Aronson and myself, and the others who lived through the frightening days of the early 1950s, must find ways to join together and begin this discussion from one end of the country to the other. I agree with Aronson that it is necessary "to give heart to succeeding generations that history has a noble continuity," and that "therein lies the real guarantee of victory." Let's get to work.

Arthur Kinoy

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Sermons and Soda Water

MAURICE ISSERMAN

AMERICA'S QUEST FOR THE IDEAL SELF: Dissent and Fulfillment in the 60s and 70s. *By Peter Clecak. Oxford University Press. 395 pp. $27.50.*

One Sunday in the 1850s, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher mounted the pulpit of Brooklyn's Plymouth Congregational Church, which at the time possessed the largest and one of the most prosperous Protestant congregations in the United States. With characteristic exuberance, he announced to the faithful:

> My friends, my heart is large today. I am like a tree upon which rains have fallen till every leaf is covered with drops of dew; and no wind goes through the boughs but I hear the pattering of some thought of joy and gratitude. I love you all more than ever before. You are crystalline to me; your faces are radiant; and I look through your eyes, as through windows, into heaven. I behold in each of you an imprisoned angel, that is yet to burst forth, and to live and shine in the better sphere.

Beecher had no use for the stern pieties of the Puritan forefathers. He was no Jeremiah, thundering out warnings of the divine retribution in store for those who betrayed the covenant. No, the God Beecher served was a loving father, who happily dispensed grace and salvation to all who had the good sense to ask for it. Beecher's preaching of the Good News made him the most popular and respected minister in mid-nineteenth-century America.

This is a more secular century, and its most influential jeremiads have come from the universities rather than the churches. From Robert Lynd in the 1920s (who trained for the ministry before he found his true calling as a sociologist) to Christopher Lasch in the 1970s, the news has been bad: Americans have broken the covenant, they've been whoring after false gods, and the consequences will be grim.

Maurice Isserman teaches history at Smith College. He is currently writing a book about the American left in the 1950s.

Peter Clecak, a professor of social thought and comparative culture at the University of California at Irvine, disagrees. With the publication of *America's Quest for the Ideal Self*, he has established himself as the Henry Ward Beecher of twentieth-century American cultural criticism. Like Beecher, Clecak is brimming with good news. He loved the 1960s and the 1970s. He loves the 1980s. His thoughts of joy and gratitude patter down indiscriminately on joggers, libertarians, gay activists and born-again Christians. About the only people he doesn't care for are "dour, doggedly humorless" puritanical critics like Lasch, who have created a "spirit of automatic negativism" which has prevented Americans from realizing how successful they've been in their "quest for the ideal self" in recent decades.

A work of faith, *America's Quest* begins with a statement of disillusionment. Clecak's first two books, his widely and justifiably praised *Radical Paradoxes* (1973) and *Crooked Paths* (1977), explored some of the problems confronting those who hope to create an effective radical politics in the United States. Although his tone in those works was skeptical, he made it clear that he thought the goal of democratic socialism a worthy one. But something has happened to Clecak since then. As he comments in the new book's prologue:

> I was not so much disillusioned (though this too) by the absence of a mature and significant American left in the seventies as I was increasingly convinced that the project of the socialist left was misconceived and in important senses overrated. The aim of social transcendence—the wish to replace one social system with another through political means—came to seem both impossible and in some senses undesirable, as it always had in sober moments.

Clecak argues that stereotyped images of the radical 1960s and the narcissistic 1970s obscure the fact that in both decades "the quest for fulfillment represented the central, energizing thrust of American culture." The movements of the 1960s, ostensibly concerned with issues of public policy and national purpose, were at their core a search for "authenticity, individual salvation within small communities of equals, and some version or another of social justice for one's own group." Radicals of the 1960s may have failed as political revolutionaries, but according to Clecak they succeeded in launching a cultural revolution that is dramatically reshaping American society. Inspired directly or indirectly by the civil rights, antiwar and feminist movements of the 1960s, taxpayers, white ethnics, evangelical and charismatic Protestants, disaffected Catholics and neoconservative and New Right intellectuals set out in the 1970s to stake "their own claims to a piece of social justice and their own cultural space." The results of this quest have been what Clecak calls "the democratization of personhood," the erosion of "structures of disadvantage," the decline of the "authority of the WASP cultural paradigm" and the growth of a rich, diverse, pluralistic and individualistic national culture. He writes:

> As I stopped trying to take the measure of American culture and society against some imagined socialist future, I began to see different shapes in the present. I came to appreciate not merely the various ideological strains, but even more the wonderfully rich, albeit cacaphonic [*sic*] possibilities for personal expression and democratic action that marked American culture by the late seventies.

Clecak has become the kind of cultural critic that *Time* magazine columnists like to quote in their think pieces on "Where America is Heading." His argument in *America's Quest* is couched in sufficiently obscure language to give it the feel of erudition, while it lends itself to summation in a few catch phrases ("the democratization of personhood," "a piece of social justice," etc.). It displays an easy familiarity with Marx, Freud and highbrow literary criticism, while paying tribute to the safest and most conventional national pieties. Clecak's authority will eventually be cited (or make its presence felt unacknowledged) in the murky term papers of countless bright high school students and dull undergraduates.

In Beecher's day, conventional wisdom held that unrestrained economic competition among individuals would inevitably lead to material abundance and social harmony. Andrew Carnegie,

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a poor immigrant bobbin-boy, set out to maximize his private economic good and in the process (as if guided by an unseen hand) created an industry that provided jobs for thousands of Americans and cheap steel for the nation's railroads and skyscrapers. Clecak has taken this nineteenth-century myth and updated it: unrestrained cultural competition among individuals inevitably leads to spiritual abundance and social harmony. For Clecak, all cultural choices, no matter how mutually antagonistic they may seem, contribute to the "democratization of personhood":

> I find, for example, the Moral Majority preferable to silence, barely so at times, but preferable nonetheless if only because it allows a voice to many who never have spoken publicly or even endorsed the public pronouncements of others. Similarly, I find most specifications of the quest offered by women on the whole reasonable, despite the range of conflicting opinions, from Marxist lesbian separatists to traditional homemakers.

Clecak might hold lesbians and homemakers in equal regard, but Jerry Falwell's followers do not. The "democratization of personhood" for Moral Majoritarians takes the curious form of seeking to restrict the democratic, cultural and sexual choices of many of their supposed companions on "the quest." Far from being content with "personal fulfillment within small communities of significant others" (which, in any case, does not seem an accurate description of the millions who watch Falwell on television), they want to impose a cultural and political uniformity. Personally, I would take Reverend Falwell over Peter Clecak as a cultural guide any day—at least Falwell knows there's a real battle going on out there.

Clecak's decision to locate the roots of the 1970s preoccupation with "self" in the 1960s is rather arbitrary. Robert and Helen Lynd's *Middletown*, published in 1929, depicts a community of people clinging to received notions of the virtues of individualism while increasingly relying on prepackaged consumer choices to express their "individuality." More recently, Stuart Ewen, Warren Susman and other historians have pointed to the many similarities between the culture of the 1920s and that of our own time. On the other hand, perhaps Clecak's decision to begin with the 1960s is not so arbitrary after all. Whatever impact his argument has rests on its novelty. When he asserts that in the 1970s, born-again Christians, radical feminists, political progressives and political conservatives "displayed a range of similar concerns . . . they were [all] contemporary pilgrims, people in quest of a more abundant life," readers might at first assume that something very profound had just been said. What if Clecak had extended his argument back to the 1920s? Would he have suggested that "Aimée Semple McPherson, Emma Goldman, Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Calvin Coolidge displayed a range of similar concerns . . . they were all contemporary pilgrims, people in quest of a more abundant life"? I suspect not. What sounds plausible as a description of the immediate past becomes ridiculous when a little historical perspective is added. In one sense or another, everyone throughout history has been in quest of "a more abundant life." So what?

With its truncated sense of time and its underlying message of political quiescence, *America's Quest* is as much a product of the 1970s as a description. The social order proved resistant to the challenges posed by the insurgent movements of the 1960s and early 1970s, so Clecak, like many others, turned to private satisfactions. In *Radical Paradoxes* he warned of the dangers of socialist utopianism; in this most recent book he has embraced a privatist utopianism. Clecak is entitled to devote the remainder of his life to perfecting an "ideal self," but I wish he wouldn't parade his choice as a superior alternative to collective democratic political action. My vision of the ideal self requires clean rainwater, a decent system of public transportation and the guaranteed absence of nuclear war for at least the next half-century (longer if I show any regard for my children's ideal selves). A "piece of social justice" is not an adequate substitute.

America's Quest is dedicated to Clecak's mother, who, he notes in a graceful acknowledgment is "sufficiently indulgent to accept a book whose main contentions strike her as simply wrong." I'm with Mrs. Clecak. □

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Literary Feminisms

LINDA BAMBER

WRITING AND SEXUAL DIFFERENCE. *Edited by Elizabeth Abel. University of Chicago Press. 322 pp. $7.95.*

FEMINIST THEORY: A Critique of Ideology. *Edited by Nannerl O. Keohane, Michelle Z. Rosaldo and Barbara C. Gelpi. University of Chicago Press. 318 pp. $7.95.*

THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN FICTION: Selected Papers From the English Institute, 1981. *Edited by Carolyn G. Heilbrun and Margaret R. Higonnet. The Johns Hopkins University Press. 216 pp. $16.50. Paper $6.95.*

DICKENS AND WOMEN. *By Michael Slater. Stanford University Press. 465 pp. $28.50.*

In D.M. Thomas's recent novel *Ararat*, a Russian writer named Victor Surkov holds a small press conference on his arrival at Kennedy International Airport. A feminist in the crowd asks him if he knows how sexist his work is. "Jesus Christ," he answers, "I don't know what you mean." The feminist, whom Surkov later describes as an "ideological bitch," replies:

> I mean that you treat women as objects, as is obvious from your remarks about dumb blondes and tits, putting your head up their skirts, women taking on eunuchs. In your writings you conceal hatred for women under a guise of compassion, by constantly showing them as victims of violence. I just wondered if the women in your country made you aware of how they feel about that.

Surkov turns to his agent and complains, "Dave, I can't answer this shit." Dave obligingly deflects the conversation. "What are you working on at present, Victor?" he asks. So much for feminist criticism.

Thomas's representation of the situation is partially correct. There are places in the culture where literary women beat literary men with the stick of feminist criticism, and literary men angrily ignore the unanswerable charges brought against them. The scene of these pointless encounters is often the literary dinner party. When the party is over, each side retires hurt and resentful and the situation returns to the *status quo ante*. Since Aristophanes' time the battle of the sexes has always been conservative, not progressive; in its latest incarnation, once again, it only throws the power inequalities into relief. Who needs to listen to that stuff? "I can't answer this shit," says the famous author to the feminist critic, and plans a satirical portrait of her for his next novel.

I wonder what Victor Surkov would make of *Writing and Sexual Difference*, *Feminist Theory: A Critique of Ideology* and *The Representation of Women in Fiction*. All three are collections of articles originally published in academic journals or delivered as talks at academic conferences. They are not meant for the general reader, and even a dedicated scholar might not want to read them late at night. But for those who have made their peace with the conventions of academic writing, they offer a sampling of state of the art feminist thought. It turns out to be considerably more sophisticated than D.M. Thomas thinks.

The central question that emerges from these collections is whether and how women inherit culture in a male-dominated society. The goal is not to humiliate or annihilate sexist literature but to reread it or redefine its context. One way to do this is to "re-inscribe the feminine" in the literature of the past—to recover lost books by women and to reinterpret the old favorites as revealing a kind of battleground between male and female. This strategy has the virtue of rescuing the female critic from interpreting literature solely in masculine terms. Now all literature is about women, even when it's not. Where women are absent or denigrated, the writing is interpreted as a defense against them—a defense against a significant threat. In "Costumes of the Mind: Transvestism as Metaphor in Modern Literature" (in *Writing and Sexual Difference*), Sandra Gilbert argues that the clothing metaphors of male modernists like D.H. Lawrence, James Joyce and T.S. Eliot were a defense against early twentieth-century feminism and "the vertiginous freedom offered by an age of changing clothes." By contrast, fe-

Linda Bamber teaches at Tufts University and is the author of Comic Women, Tragic Men: Gender and Genre in Shakespeare *(Stanford University Press).*

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male modernists Virginia Woolf, H.D. and Djuna Barnes saw transvestism as a liberation rather than as a serious perversion.

Another way of redefining literature is to contain or limit the masculine culture that has produced it. In "Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness" (also in *Writing and Sexual Difference*), Elaine Showalter argues the existence of a "muted" culture that women belong to but men do not. Women's writing is therefore a "double-voiced discourse," and women writers have all the advantages and disadvantages of the émigré, the outsider, the upwardly mobile member of an ethnic group.

For Myra Jehlen, however, whose clearsighted "Archimedes and the Paradox of Feminist Criticism" is included in *Feminist Theory*, there is but one culture and that culture is sexist. Feminists must therefore come out of "the enclaves of women's studies" and undertake "the investigation, from the women's point of view, of everything." Jehlen compares feminist critics to Archimedes, who could move the world with his lever if only he could get off it first. Feminist critics could change the culture if only they weren't a part of it. She speculates that the very forms of our thought, women's as well as men's, are sexist, even in those literary genres where women have achieved their greatest successes. The novel, she suggests, may depend for its integrity on the association between women, passivity and the private life. Like a bourgeois Marxist, Jehlen implicitly calls for the demise of the very culture that has created her.

Jehlen's brilliance is partly a matter of masterful steering between Scylla and Charybdis, between two kinds of feminist self-consolation, "winning for women the right to be men" and "taking the opposite sentimental tack and celebrating the feminine identity of an oppressed past as ideal womanhood." Elsewhere, Jehlen refuses either to claim great male literature for feminism or to condemn it for sexism. It is "provincialism," she says, to say that "when Shakespeare depicted bastards as scheming subversives, Jews as merchants of flesh, and women as hysterics, he meant none of it but was only using the local idiom." He *did* mean it, but that shouldn't mean the end of Shakespeare studies. For all literature is biased in one way or another:

> Paradoxically, it is just because the fictional universe is wholly subjective

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> and therefore ideological that the value of its ideology is almost irrelevant to its literary value.

Jehlen is confident that feminist criticism has better work to do than the endless and repetitive business of uncovering misogyny in literature.

Writing and Sexual Difference, the most consistent of the three collections, proposes that the task of feminist criticism is to analyze the difference it makes to be a woman reader or writer. The theme is elegantly introduced by reproductions on the front and back covers of the book. On the front is Mary Cassatt's "The Letter"; on the back is Quentin Metsys's "Erasmus of Rotterdam." Erasmus, wearing an enormous black cloak, is sitting in his study writing in an enormous book. Cassatt's woman has written a one-page note on a graceful little desk in the corner of a living room. She is wearing a pretty dress patterned as a negative of the pretty wallpaper behind her. The point here is the enmeshment of the woman writer in her social situation, for better and for worse. Erasmus alone dominates Metsys's canvas; the woman in "The Letter" is part of something else.

If the cover illustrations imply that the lives of men and women are of different but comparable significance, several of the essays, influenced by recent French feminist theory, identify the feminine not as an alternative to the masculine but as a kind of vacuum within culture, something that can't be spoken or even thought. In "The Question of Language: Men of Maxims and *The Mill on the Floss*," Mary Jacobus draws on the theories of Luce Irigaray to illuminate George Eliot's difficulties in thinking and writing about her experience. The problem, never to be solved, is that there is no "specifically feminine linguistic practice," no language or form for what happens to women. Women's writing, therefore, "is a critique which gestures beyond cultural boundaries, indicating the perimeters within which their writing is produced." That sounds sad, but the French theorists have managed to associate the unspeakable difference with boundless subversive energy. French feminism is allied with the attack on centrism, hierarchy, system: the banner of difference, once a sign of oppression or at best the liberal struggle for equal rights, becomes a sign of revolutionary vitality.

Writing and Sexual Difference and *Feminist Theory* contain other essays on the level of Jacobus's and Jehlen's. I was particularly struck by Julia Kristeva's "Women's Time" and Susan Gubar's " 'The Blank Page' and Issues of Female Creativity." Gubar's essay (in *Writing and Sexual Difference*), which includes a brilliant reading of an Isak Dinesen short story, is particularly noteworthy because it is fun to read, speedy, witty and surprising. But these volumes as a whole are so demanding and require so much submission to the specialized language of academia that one is apt to rebel against anything less than brilliance. Without theory, says Lenin, no revolution. Nor art, I think. But it is particularly disappointing to break through dense theoretical language and find nothing new on the other side.

A couple of articles in *The Representation of Women in Fiction* are examples of language for its own sake. J. Hillis Miller's " 'Herself Against Herself': The Clarification of Clara Middleton" reads as if its very distinguished author were trying to write something suitable for the occasion but didn't quite grasp what feminist criticism is. It is no accident, says Miller,

> that so many male novelists . . . so often project into a female protagonist the dramatization of that question fundamental to the novel, Can we or can we not believe that human beings, male and female, have fixed selves? The female protagonist has a lesson to teach us men. The assumption that ontologically substantial characters exist cannot be detached from the logocentrism or phallogocentrism which underlies it and of which it is a version.

Miller gallantly offers Clara Middleton's "ontological insubstantiality" as something women can feel proud of. Clara, a character in George Meredith's *The Egoist*, discovers that she has no "central column of self" but exists only as "a gap" around which "flow or burn or blow her evanescent moods, whims, wiles, inconsistencies." Now, is that good or bad for feminism? And exactly what lesson can the fictional female protagonist teach "us" flesh-and-blood men? " 'Herself Against Herself' " isn't based on questions the author needed to ask. All that comes through is a vague good will.

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ey's "*Persuasion* and the Promises of Love." In Jane Austen's time, says Poovey,

> individualism . . . began to color the way in which personal happiness was conceptualized and courted. Even among the upper classes, fewer marriages were "arranged" by parents, and even if economic considerations . . . continued to play a prominent role in many personal alliances, an increasing number of novels celebrating "sensibility," "romantic love," and the prerogatives of the heart no doubt encouraged young women, in particular, to consider not only compatibility and income but also the affective intensity of romantic love as essential components of courtship and marriage.

Translation: In Jane Austen's time, women were marrying for love as well as money. This is news? No, it is the sort of writing that gives the intellectual life a bad name.

Dickens and Women, by Michael Slater, offers a less strenuous kind of feminist criticism. No grand theories are attempted, no global problems are addressed. The book deals first with the women in Dickens's life; next with the female characters in his novels; and finally, in a section called "The Womanly Ideal," with Dickens's attitude toward women. From a feminist point of view, the story of Dickens's life is pretty awful. He married Catherine Hogarth, the mild, unintellectual daughter of a newspaper colleague, and set up housekeeping with her and her teen-age sister Mary, whom he secretly preferred. When Mary died a year later, another sister, Georgina, moved in. Georgina stayed with Dickens as selfless, sexless nurturer even after he stormily divorced Catherine seventeen years later. Before the divorce, Dickens apparently forced Catherine to call on his new love, Ellen Ternan. Dickens's daughter Katey wrote:

> My father was like a madman when my mother left home . . . this affair brought out all that was worst—all that was weakest in him. He did not care a damn what happened to any of us. Nothing could surpass the misery and unhappiness of our home.

Like many nineteenth-century male writers—Wordsworth, Carlyle, Leslie Stephen, to name a few—Dickens depended on a system of female support for his enormous productivity. (Brecht called his own floating system of female support his "means of production.") Slater presents the women in Dickens's life in a kindly and responsible way: Dickens's mother, he points out, wasn't as mean as her son made her out to be, nor was poor Catherine as clumsy and colorless. Sometimes it is Dickens Slater lobbies for. Of Dickens's forcing his wife to call on Ellen Ternan, Slater remarks, "This seems such monstrously cruel behaviour . . . that one instinctively seeks some . . . explanation." And comes up with one: Maybe Dickens was technically innocent at the time and was only trying to silence the gossip. Slater establishes himself as an utterly trustworthy referee, quoting widely and impartially from juicy primary materials.

Slater's writing is serviceable rather than juicy, and sometimes the reader has the feeling of being in the land where note cards have driven out ideas. In "The Womanly Ideal," for example, we move much too slowly between Dickens on female employment (only acceptable as an extension of domestic skills), Dickens on female education (for household rule) and Dickens on female spirituality (superior to men's). Slater might have brought out the relationships between his themes—and also saved himself some space—if he had organized his material along specifically feminist lines. But if he shies away from feminist categories, he does have quite a well-developed feminist consciousness. Precisely because Slater is a thoroughgoing Dickensian and not a feminist theorist, it is cheering to see him begin his discussion of "female energy" with the following sentence:

> Women banded together for any purpose are always presented as alarming by Dickens, even when the object of their association is essentially a good one and not simply the oppression of hapless males.

After so much rancor from literary men like D.M. Thomas, it is a pleasure to see a gentleman scholar like Slater using feminist perspectives without thinking twice about it. □

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Victor Navasky on Rosenberg Books

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Midwestern Matriarch

FRAN R. SCHUMER

DURING THE REIGN OF THE QUEEN OF PERSIA. *By Joan Chase. Harper & Row. 215 pp. $14.95.*

Not since *The New Yorker* expropriated the "we" pronoun for its Talk of the Town has anyone managed to use it as gracefully as Joan Chase in this evocative first novel. The "we" in *During the Reign of the Queen of Persia* are four young girls, two sets of sisters, growing up on a farm where the men are beaten down by the women and the women are beaten down by life. It is a mournful look at life in the heartland, in this case northern Ohio; the mood is thoroughly American Gothic and grim.

But how beautifully Chase can be grim! Her language is as rich and as fertile as the farmland she writes about, and her vision so full that, even with the encumbrance of the "we" narrator, the novel reads like a single unbroken thought, a sentence in need of no punctuation, a long, undying moan. Here is Chase on the coming of age of Celia, one among the "we":

> It was a confidence that came upon her, suddenly and entirely, so that it didn't matter that summer after summer her hair had swung out with more sun-riffled gleam or that her body swelled here and tightened there into a figure that was at the same time voluptuous and lissome. Effortlessly, she appealed to boys, boys who ever after seemed to wander our place with the innocent milking confusion of lambs for the slaughter.

This is a novel about sisters, but not about sisterhood; about mothers and daughters, but hardly from a feminist perspective. It is one of the benefits of writing in this so-called postfeminist era that one can say insightful things about women and their interactions and yet focus on themes that transcend sexual lines. Chase's novel is about life—and death and loss and growing up. It is as if Thomas Wolfe's Eugene Gant were a woman—four of them—and took another, longer look homeward. Here, home is the farm in the late 1950s, the site of a family reunion of sorts. Grace, the mother of two of the four girls who narrate the book, is stricken with cancer, and her illness brings three generations of women back to the farm.

There they are under the rule of Gram, the reigning monarch in this Midwestern matriarchy, the "Queen of Persia," as one of her less hostile sons-in-law calls her. Gram is "tart-tongued and ornery," a shrewd old woman, the sentimentality dried out of her by hard work and hard times, too many "kids . . . and useless men." She has what some of her five daughters seem to lack: the ability to survive. But of course there's a price. She has none of the softness of Aunt Grace or the saintliness of Aunt May. Having come into some money, she spends her days ruling the roost and her nights playing Bingo.

She has a husband, Grandad, but he is little better than the other husbands in the book, who are at best kind and weak, and at worst mean and weak. Not that the women are exempt from blame: it is a comment on life in this house full of women that Grandad prefers to spend his time in the company of his cows.

There are fights between the men and women and fights among the women themselves. One of Gram's daughters may be dying of cancer, but there is time enough to argue about who does more dishes and who got Gram's mink coat and why. Between mothers and daughters the battle is especially intense. Celia, the oldest of the "we," was the first to mature and challenge her determinedly unromantic mother on the issue of sex. There's a great deal of name-calling and door-slamming, and yet each time the mother-daughter bond is stretched, it snaps back with equal force. "They seemed to us like lovers who quarrel for the sake of reconciliation," the narrative "we" observes.

It is only Gram who takes on a tougher adversary. Her fight is with life, and when her favorite daughter dies, she loses that round. Still, she sells the house, packs her family off to a smaller one that's easier to keep up, and pooh-poohs any tearful looks back. As a final epitaph, an uncle picks up the trombone he's been toying with for years and plays. "He told us that each time he played he got worse, instead of better, which he thought about summed up life anyway."

This is a dreary note on which to end the queen's reign. But Joan Chase's remarkable novel is too full of life to leave us in despair. One's last impression is that here is a story more beautiful than sad. □

Fran R. Schumer's reviews and articles have appeared in The New York Times. *Her fiction has been published in* The North American Review.

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Tearstruck highbrow, touchy and extreme,
Reaching for the heights to climb but one,
Soulmate looking for a place to lie,
By the talented flow of Iceland's lava,
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I swear that you and I will meet again.

Howard Moss

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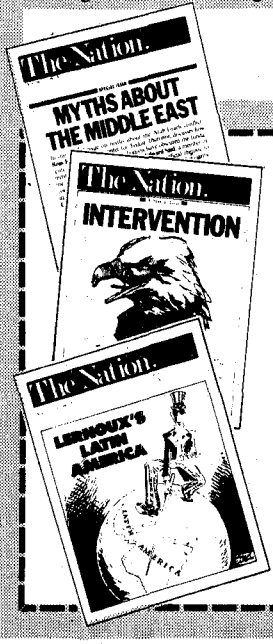

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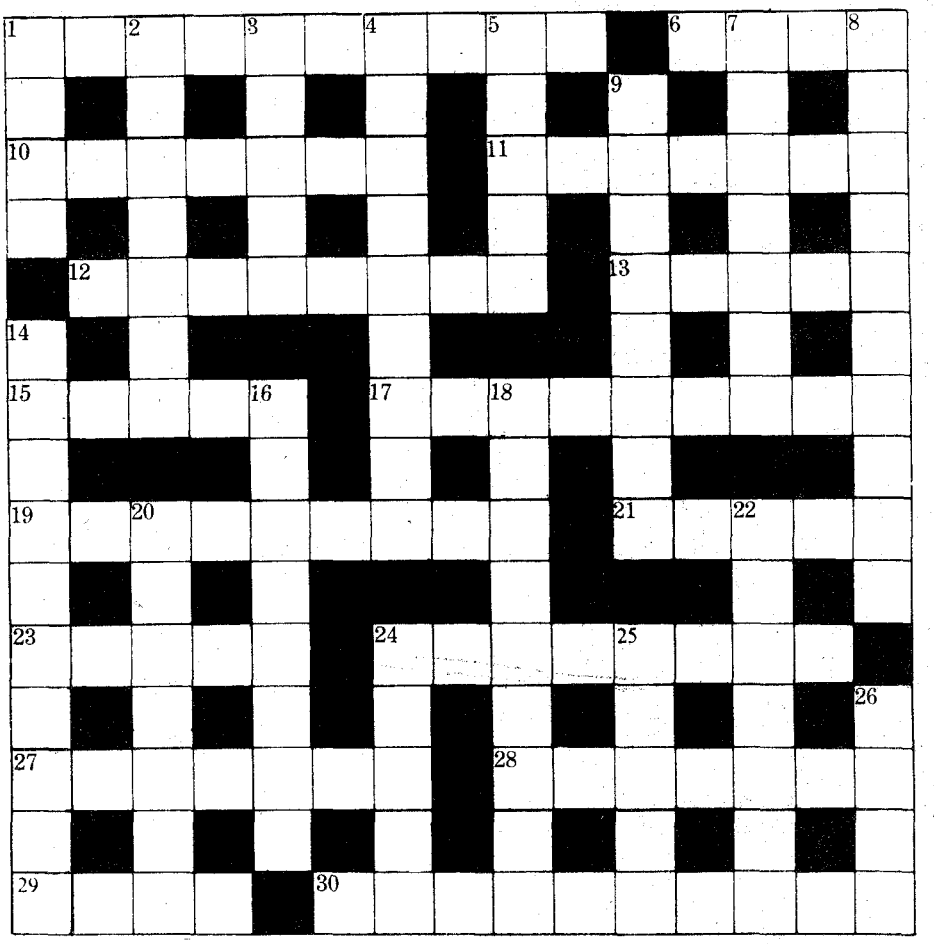
E	■	A	■	A	■	U	■	N	■	I	■	P	■	S
V	I	N	E	G	A	R	■	W	A	T	T	E	A	U
I	■	D	■	U	■	S	■	A	■	B	■	P	■	N
L	E	A	F	E	A	T	E	R	■	E	A	S	E	D
S	■	L	■	R	■	■	■	D	■	L	■	I	■	A
A	U	S	T	R	I	A	■	E	X	O	G	A	M	Y
D	■	■	■	E	■	S	■	Y	■	W	■	■	■	B
V	A	R	I	O	U	S	■	E	N	T	H	R	A	L
O	■	A	■	T	■	U	■	■	■	H	■	E	■	U
C	O	V	E	Y	■	R	I	F	L	E	F	I	R	E
A	■	E	■	P	■	A	■	I	■	B	■	S	■	L
T	E	N	S	I	O	N	■	C	H	E	L	S	E	A
E	■	N	■	S	■	C	■	H	■	L	■	U	■	W
■	C	A	T	T	L	E	R	U	S	T	L	E	R	S

Crossword Puzzle No. 1974

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Responsible for *Tales of the River Santa*. (10)
6 Watercolor? (4)
10 Muse to turn back 3 down? (7)
11 Might be placed in the warehouse or in the stage. (7)
12 Something soothing spoken in the castle, perhaps. (8)
13 Franklin's key and checks might be. (5)
15 and 7 down The Fourth, in Old Rome? Or in Paris? (5,7)
17 Secretariat, perhaps, if the chores are difficult. (9)
19 and 21 It's irrelevant where you put the decimal! (6,3,5)
23 and 24 How they fought for their innocence! (5,2,6)
27 If things are getting under your skin, this might hold the solution. (7)
28 Full of nothing? That's bad! (7)
29 With 21, it's a touchy matter. (And a rose by some other name?) (4)
30 In case of 1 across, it used to imply boy gets girl. (Or is one nude met in akward circumstances?) (10)

DOWN

1 Not a bad yarn—just in dialect! (4)
2 Bend 3? Or have some response about France's beginnings. (7)
3 A wooden support one side of center? (5)
4 Between Latin and French ready to translate, perhaps. (9)
5 It holds things up, if you break a lease. (5)
7 See 15 across
8 The 18th of these was nobly experimental. (10)
9 Where to make the whole thing jump? (8)
14 What people jocularly say they have to do, if they're much too rare? (They suggest wagers within the social group.) (4,6)
16 Somewhat bumpy? (8)
18 This should have a swell effect on the orchestra. (9)
20 One might be when crossing the ice on foot, perhaps. (7)
22 The story of a common Russian carrying a garden implement. (7)
24 Finding an insect to exist as naturalist? (5)
25 Mickey might be associated with a black eye, perhaps. (5)
26 Full of morbid matter contained in racy stories. (4)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

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